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ABSTRACT

Five Youth Employment and Demonstration Program Act (YEDPA) programs are compared with the Career Intern Program (CIP) (an alternative high school program aiming to prepare dropouts, and those likely to abandon school, for employment) in terms of emphasizing issues related to program implementation. The YEDPA programs selected for comparison upon the basis of shared characteristics were; the Youth Incentive Entitlement Programs, Youth Community Service, Exemplary in School, School to Work, and Job Corps. An overview of these is given in Chapter II. The findings of the quantitative and qualitative analytic approach used to examine various client and administration related issues are described and synthesized, and factors accounting for the findings explored. Chapter III compares the following client related implementation variables one at a time across the programs: demographic and sociological characteristics, local labor market; participation incentives; entrance requirements and eligibility; perceptions of program prestige and stability. The administration related issues compared in the following chapter include: staff selection and training; activities; coordination and cooperation with local education authorities and local communities; providing work-experiences. Factors accounting for significant implementation outcomes and operations are also explored. The final chapter presents conclusions and policy implications. (AEF)

Study of the Career Intern Program

Final Report—Task D: Volume I: A Comparison of Implementation Issues in YEDPA Programs

Prepared for the National Institute of Education

RMC Research Corporation, Mountain View, California

Nelly P. Stromquist

May 1981

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STUDY OF THE CAREER INTERN PROGRAM

Task D Final Report
Volume I

A Comparison of Implementation Issues in YEDPA Programs

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PREFACE

This report covers one portion of a study conducted by RMC Research Corporation to evaluate the Career Intern Program (CIP), an alternative educational program aimed at out-of-school youths and those likely to abandon high school. This study was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and administered by the National Institute of Education (NIE) during 1978-81.

The original evaluation requested by NIE called for a comparison of the CIP to other similar career-oriented programs in terms of their "effectiveness, feasibility, and other factors important to policy." As RMC gathered data on various career-oriented programs, it became evident that certain comparisons were more appropriate with programs that existed prior to YEDPA and that other types of comparisons applied to programs funded under YEDPA.

A comparison of YEDPA programs in terms of effectiveness (understood to mean the program's ability to increase the employability of participating youths) was undoubtedly perceived as of critical importance by those in policy-making spheres. The issue of effectiveness, however, defied a sensible study. In principle, YEDPA program participants could have been compared in terms of cognitive outcomes (i.e., growth in basic skills and knowledge about the world of work) and affective outcomes (i.e., attitude toward work, feelings about their own person's abilities and worth). But as the study proceeded, it became evident that cognitive outcomes could not be compared inasmuch as the YEDPA programs offered very different services and pursued different cognitive outcomes. A "comparison," thus, would not reveal differences in effectiveness across programs but merely reflect differences in program objectives.

Affective outcomes were also difficult to compare because, in addition to the above reasons, the various instruments in use to assess self-esteem, attitude toward work, feelings of autonomy, etc., have not reached a stage of conceptual and methodological development that would allow their comparability.

Finally, a comparison of YEDPA programs in terms of effectiveness was altogether inappropriate because many of the programs were, in fact, so only in name. Few components of any given program were explicit and described in reasonable detail. Moreover, considerable discretion existed at the local level to determine both the mix and intensity of key components, such as work experience, career awareness, basic skills, and counseling.

On the other hand, a comparison of YEDPA programs in terms of feasibility, or ease of implementation, issues appeared sensible because this comparison needed similarities at a broader level of

program operations. Further, the YEDPA programs had a number of characteristics--explained in later pages--that made a study of implementation both important and timely.

The Advisory Panel to the CIP study acknowledged the general state of affairs and recommended separate comparisions for YEDPA and for non-YEDPA programs. In consequence, a two-fold approach was followed by RMC. A comparison emphasizing issues related to program effectiveness is presented in Classie Foat's volume of Task D, Comparisions of the CIP with other similar youth programs. A comparison emphasizing issues related to implementation is presented in this volume. It is hoped that the purpose of this comparison, that of assessing the feasibility of translating intentions into actions, will prove helpful to the reader with a role in policy making and policy implementation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The increasing level of unemployment among youths, particularly minority youths, has led political leaders to pass legislation creating training and employment programs for them. Under the Youth Employment and Demonstration Program Act (YEDPA) of 1977, a myriad of programs were mandated that range in emphasis from the provision of intensive work experience to academic instruction.

The explicit assumption behind the creation of these programs is that, by allowing youths to receive career training in any of its various forms, they will be: (a) better prepared for the world of work, (b) more knowledgeable of the job market, and (c) more able to find and retain jobs.

This report does not question the above assumption nor examine whether the desired results have been obtained. Accepting as a given that training and employment programs are needed, the report focuses its attention on the process of implementation, that is to say, on the series of actions that are needed to put these programs "in place."

Although there is an increased awareness among policy makers that implementation is a complex, often difficult, process, they appear invariably to expect prompt and smooth action following the passage of their laws. Failure to see programs functioning as anticipated is usually attributed to the ineptitude or inefficiency of program operators. And yet, there are many factors affecting implementation that are clearly beyond the program operator's control.

The recent establishment of a varied "menu" of YEDPA programs, though not uniformly documented, offers a unique opportunity to understand the dynamics of implementation. This opportunity is possible because these programs share basic commonalities and, very importantly, because the large number of such programs allows the researcher to use a comparative approach.

The YEDPA programs selected for inclusion in the present investigation shared the following conditions:

(a) were started at the same time and had been in operation for similar lengths of time,

(b) were uniformly targeted on undereducated and underemployed youths,

(c) were started largely "from scratch," that is to say, by new organizations using untried procedures, and

(d) were dependent on the cooperation of local agencies (particularly school districts and businesses) for the implementation of important program components.

Most studies of implementation have employed the case study approach. This approach produces detailed information but does not lead to a general understanding of implementation processes because researchers tend to deal with each case as if it were unique rather than looking for commonalities with other programs. Further, it is often not possible to gain inductive knowledge from the accumulation of case studies because each study tends to use concepts differently. Even more seriously, as Montjay and O'Toole (1979) note, rules for selecting and interpreting information are usually undefined within single-case approaches. By looking at several programs, in contrast, this study uses a comparative approach.

The study looks at the process of program implementation at the local level. It centers on program features that have been difficult to implement and about which useful information has been acquired. For the most part, the issues chosen for analysis are intimately related to one or more of the following three areas in which federal policy makers hope to acquire new information:

- the feasibility of new institutional arrangements for the provision of work-oriented programs,
- the extent to which young people can be provided "meaningful" work experiences, and
- the appeal of current delivery programs to the target group.

These concerns are included among the priority issues of the 1977 DOL Knowledge Development Plan (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977, pp. 8-9). A better understanding of them, consequently, should be useful to policy makers and policy analysts.

A Two-Actor Approach to Implementation

This study defines implementation as the series of actions and events that must occur for a program to operate. It also sees implementation as dependent on the behaviors of two different set of actors: program implementors and clients.

To set social programs in motion administrators and other staff members must carry out a set of prescribed activities. To do so requires both expertise and discretion. Thus the role of program personnel in program implementation is obviously critical.

On the other hand, a key characteristic of many social programs is that participation by the intended clients is voluntary--the beneficiaries are usually not obligated to participate. YEDPA

programs are among those with this characteristic: unemployed and economically disadvantaged youth are given the option of joining these programs, but there are no sanctions against choosing not to do so.

Client-related implementation issues. Studies of implementation, particularly those investigating federal programs, have typically focused attention on management issues in seeking to explain the success or failure of program implementation. Much less concern has been devoted to assessing how the client's response to the program affects its implementation. Implicit in this lack of attention is the belief that clients generally feel a need for the services the programs provide or at least that their attitudes toward these services have only a small bearing on the implementation of the programs. On the other hand, if programs have the needed personnel, financial sources, and treatment characteristics, but fail to attract their intended clients, they cannot succeed. Since many programs have experienced difficulty in finding clients willing to be served, it seems altogether appropriate to examine this aspect of program implementation.

This study assumes that the choice to participate in a career-oriented program is based on a conscious preference for joining the program over whatever other options may exist. Further, the individual choice is considered as constrained by certain ascriptive, socialization, and contextual factors. This conceptualization has led to identifying five main client-related variables affecting implementation. They are:

(a) demographic and sociological characteristics;
(b) the local labor market;
(c) incentives attached to participation;
(d) program eligibility and entrance requirements; and
(e) perceptions of program prestige and stability.

Although economists have often considered demographic and sociological characteristics as well as the local labor market in studies of participation in the labor force, the above factors have not previously been recognized in the study of implementation. The present study attempts to do so.

Administration-related implementation issues. The implementation of YEDPA programs calls for a variety of activities to be undertaken by program staff. Activities common to these programs are:

(a) selecting and training staff,
(b) carrying out youth recruitment activities,
(c) coordinating services with the LEA,
(d) providing work experiences, and
(e) obtaining cooperation from community members and agencies.

Each of these activities represents a key element directly related to the provision of the intended YEDPA treatments. These activities are not totally under the control of administrators, but administrators initiate them and can shape their outcomes to a considerable degree.

Data on administration-related issues compiled in conjunction with this study are organized and analyzed under the five activities mentioned above. In addition, we have considered the role of community-based organizations (CBOs) in the implementation of YEDPA programs for two reasons. First, policy makers have a great interest in assessing the potential of CBOs in serving the needs of disadvantaged youths, and second, data are available relative to the abilities of CBOs in all of the five activity areas.

Issues such as the attendance and retention of program clients are also included under the heading of administration-related issues. Although these matters are clearly not implementation activities, they merit attention because they have proven to be quite accurate barometers of implementation effectiveness.

Methodology

The analytical approach used herein examines the various client- and administration-related issues one at a time, across the selected YEDPA programs. It describes and synthesizes various findings about each issue and explores the factors accounting for the findings. Since, in social science research, it is rarely possible to isolate and manipulate variables directly, the comparative method is used in an attempt to manipulate variables indirectly (Holt & Turner, 1970).

The analysis combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, depending on the type of data available from the implementation studies.

The reader is cautioned that the comparisons in this report have been made in the face of numerous methodological deterrants. To begin with, coverage of implementation activities in various studies is by no means uniform. In some cases, use of the same "label" in different studies may mask important differences in the entities so labeled. In other cases, some seemingly comparable findings may be reported at different levels of detail, making their aggregation an uncertain task.

Another major problem is that of explanation. While it is possible in making comparisons such as those undertaken here to control some factors, numerous others remained uncontrolled and even unknown. In the absence of controlled variables, one cannot readily distinguish major from minor causes, and--in extreme cases--causes from effects. Some problems of explanation derive from the secondary-source nature of the data. It is not always possible to

conclude, for instance, why a given factor is missing. Is it because it did not play a role in the implementation process or because those who evaluated the program did not take it into account?

These various considerations, taken together, make it clear that the "explanations" offered here can be no more than plausible hypotheses with logic and "expert judgment" often filling gaps between bits of relevant data. The reader will find that some inferences are based on clearly interpretable data while others require more heroic assumptions.

Data Sources

Under YEDPA funding, there are four major "programs;" that is to say, alternative treatments given to youths:

- the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC)
- the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects (YIEPP or Entitlement)
- the Youth Conservation and Improvement Projects (YCCIP), and
- the Youth Employment and Training Programs (YETP).

Programs to be compared. Because YACC and YCCIP have no instructional component (as CIP does) and focus exclusively on the provision of jobs, they were judged too different from the CIP to be useful and were thus excluded from the comparisons.

Both Entitlement and YETP combine training and employment opportunities; however, the universe of programs under YETP includes numerous small, locally developed, and insufficiently studied programs. In consequence, it appeared sensible to limit the study to those YETP programs that are either operating in multiple sites or on a scale likely to be accompanied by careful studies of their implementation. These considerations brought the number of suitable programs to six:

- the Youth Incentive Entitlement Programs (Entitlement): a set of 17 small-to-large, work-oriented programs (with projected enrollments ranging from 200 to 8,000 youths), offering subsidized employment in return for school attendance.
- the Youth Community Service (YCS): a medium-sized program (1,600) characterized by its emphasis on a personalized approach to job training and community participation.

- the Career Intern Program (CIP): a small alternative high school (300 students) offering no financial incentive but enabling youths to obtain high school diplomas. The CIP was implemented in four different sites.

- Exemplary-in-School (Exemplary): small programs operating within the regular high school and providing career information, guidance, job skills, and academic credit for work experience.

- School-to-Work: small programs operating also within the regular high school but run by non-educational agencies. These programs provide vocational and career training, and job placement.

- Job Corps: small and medium-sized programs offering vocational education and basic skills as needed by the students. These programs operate outside the school system and offer no academic certification.

Though not strictly YEDPA, Job Corps is included because it has instructional and employment training components. In addition, significant data are available on program initiation and operation.

Data Sources

Both first-hand and secondary data were used for the comparison study. Information about the CIP was gathered through frequent week-long visits to the four sites implementing the program. These visits utilized naturalistic observations and unstructured interviews with program personnel, youths, and community members. The sites were visited by a total of six investigators; the perceptions of these individuals were cross-compared to verify their reliability. CIP data also included status and progress reports prepared by program disseminators and administrators.

Information about the other YEDPA programs was derived from preliminary and final reports produced by program operators or by external evaluators. The latter obtained their data mostly by observations and informal interviews, although in some instances they used questionnaires.

Organization of the Report

Chapter II of this report presents an overview of the characteristics of the selected YEDPA programs. Chapter III examines client-related implementation issues. Chapter IV compares the implementation experiences on various administration-related issues.

Chapter V explores factors accounting for significant implementation outcomes and explains how these factors affected program start-up and operations. Chapter VI presents conclusions and policy implications. Areas deserving further study are also mentioned.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF YEDPA PROGRAMS

Program Objectives

The YEDPA legislation emphasizes training and employment programs since it considers youth unemployment to be significantly affected by such structural factors as deficiences in the youths in knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward work. The target group for these programs comprises economically disadvantaged and minority youths. YEDPA programs seek to serve youths out of school and those still in school but likely to abandon their studies (that is, actual and potential dropouts).

The overall objective of the YEDPA programs is to improve the life chances of the target youths through increased academic and career training and familiarity with work situations.

Distinguishing Features of the Selected Programs

Despite similarities in long-range objectives and clientele, the YEDPA programs examined herein differ substantially in the types of service provided to the participants and in the incentives offered for participation.

Services to Participants. Although DOL-funded programs seek to provide work experiences, such experiences range from "job shadowing" (observation of a given job) to actual task performance. Within the CIP, "Hands-On" work experience most often amounts to job shadowing, although, in several instances, interns were placed in actual jobs. In YCS, Exemplary, School-to-Work, and Entitlement, the youth performs job assignments given by an employer. In Job Corps there is no work experience.

With respect to duration and scope, the CIP work experience lasts the equivalent of 10 full days and covers two different occupations. In the other programs, it covers a single occupation but lasts an entire year, ranging from 10 to 40 hours per week.

In terms of job selection, both the CIP and YCS make serious attempts to match work experiences to youth interests. CIP participants select Hands-On experiences interesting to them, and about which they have done previous research. In the YCS, particular work experiences emerge as the result of formal negotiations between youths and the work sponsors. In Entitlement, Exemplary, and School-to-Work, the matching process receives less emphasis: work slots are found in various organizations or firms, and program participants are placed in them. Consequently, choices are constrained by the employers available.

In the CIP, work experience is not remunerated. In the case of Entitlement, the minimum hourly wage is paid by the employer who, in turn, is reimbursed by DOL. Participants in YCS are not paid a salary per se, but receive an annual stipend for their "volunteer services." The amount of the stipend, however, is approximately equal to the minimum wage for the hours worked. In Exemplary and School-to-Work, youths are paid, and wages are subsidized.

Another major difference among programs is the provision of career training, career awareness, or career education. In the case of the CIP, the interns receive approximately one hour of career-related instruction daily for two semesters. In addition, instructors make an effort to present a "fused curriculum," by relating academic subjects to practical applications. In YCS, participants receive 30-40 days of career-oriented training in a class situation. Under Entitlement, there are no specific provisions for career training, but the work experience is assumed to fulfill a training function. Beyond that, Entitlement participants are expected to join an academic program either in the regular high school or through GED courses. The other programs vary substantially in the amount of career training provided.

Most YEDPA programs offer supportive services to their enrollees, although the intensity and diversity of these services can be very different across programs. In the CIP, both an academic and a career counselor are assigned to a group of 20-40 interns, and each participant receives occupational as well as personal counseling. In the YCS there is no personal counseling, but some informal career counseling is provided. This program also offers auxiliary services such as medical attention. In Entitlement, the extent of counseling varies from site to site, since each contractor develops and manages his/her own program. All these work-oriented programs offer counseling services that are quantitatively and qualitatively different from those of the public high schools, where counselors typically have a case load of 300 or more students.

A common feature of the YEDPA programs is their reliance on the immediate community for the supply of work experiences. Both profit-making companies and non-profit agencies are expected to cooperate by accepting youths in various occupational experiences. Three of the programs (Entitlement, School-to-Work, and Exemplary-in-School) subsidize the youths' wages, so employers do not have to bear these expenses. Both the CIP and YCS rely entirely on the employers' good will.

The CIP, Entitlement, Exemplary, and School-to-Work programs are all dependent on the local school district (LEA). Since these programs seek to increase the formal education levels of their enrollees, the LEA is expected to assist by identifying potential participants (from among the schools' past and present students), readmitting students who had dropped out, modifying schedules to

mesh with work time requirements, and granting academic credit for work experience.

Incentives for Participants. To youths who are no longer in the regular public school or who are thinking of leaving it, the CIP offers an alternative educational setting where they can receive individualized attention in both academic and career areas. Upon completion of required courses, participants obtain a regular high school diploma--a much desired credential. On the other hand, they receive no direct financial help. Many of them with child-care, housing, or medical needs are referred to social agencies, but the program itself does not provide such services.

The appeal of Entitlement rests on the promise of a work experience for which remuneration is provided. Each participant is assured employment at the minimum wage, part-time during the academic year and full-time during the summer. To qualify for these guaranteed jobs, however, participants must remain in or return to an academic setting, usually a public high school.

The incentives offered by the School-to-Work and the Exemplary-in-School programs are very similar to those given by Entitlement, except that they provide career-related instruction in addition to the work experience.

Unlike the above programs, the YCS offers no academic credit. It promises instead a "meaningful" work experience that is supposed to operate on a one-to-one basis with a sponsor and to be closly related to the youth's occupational interest. In addition, the program offers a food-and-lodging stipend as well as health care benefits and vacation time. As noted earlier, the YCS stipend is approximately equal to the minimum wage.

Common Characteristics among Programs. Each of these work-oriented programs offers a different set of "treatments" and incentives to youths. However, they share five broad characteristics: youth participation on a voluntary basis; provision of work experience; some form of career training; dependence on the local community for work experiences; and dependence on the LEA for referral and acceptance of students.

These common characteristics make it possible to compare implementation experiences across programs. At the same time, variations within the specifics of each characteristic allow the examination of alternative explanations for the various implementation outcomes.

Table 1 briefly describes the main features of the selected YEDPA programs.

Table 1
Main Program Features of the Selected YEDPA Programs

Program	Status Relative to the LEA	Academic Instruction	Career-Related Instruction	Work Experience	Financial Incentives	Length of Program	Participation Hours/Week
Career Intern Program	Alternative high school within LEA	Yes--continuous credit given	Yes--continuous	Yes--two weeks long.	None	Until attainment of high school diploma	35
Entitlement	School program available to low-income students	Yes--continuous credit or GED given	No	Yes	Hourly wages, subsidized	School year	15-20 (reg. school year) 30-40 (summer)
School-to-Work	School program available to low-income students	Yes--continuous credit given	Yes--continuous	Yes	Hourly wages, subsidized	School year	4-8
YCS	Independent program	Yes--no credit	Yes	Yes--continuous	Monthly stipend	12 mo.	40
Exemplary-in-school	School program available to low-income students	Yes--continuous credit given	Yes	Yes	Hourly wages, subsidized	School year	10-15
Job Corps	Independent program	Some, as needed by student--no credit	Yes	No--program offers vocational practice	Monthly stipend	Varies with occupation selected	40

III. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES RELATED TO YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The variety of services and incentives characterizing YEDPA programs reflects a curious combination of lack of knowledge and a desire to learn on the part of the legislators. It indicated, on the one hand, that little was known regarding the motivational and need patterns of disadvantaged youths and how best to help them. On the other hand, the willingness to offer a myriad of work-oriented programs was based on the hope that much would be learned from the differential success of these programs.

Whether ignorance or a thirst for knowledge prevailed, YEDPA legislators assumed that youths would respond with enthusiasm to the proposed solutions. Yet significantly fewer youths than anticipated decided to take part in all of the programs designed to help them.

The YEDPA implementation experience showed that the option of enrolling in one of these programs competes with a number of alternative courses of action available to the target youths. These choices are not limited to economic ones, such as taking up a menial job or joining the army. They also include choosing between maintaining one's life style (keeping daily routines and peer and family ties unchanged) and attempting to "make something out of oneself" (deciding to face a number of disruptions to attain a higher status in society).

Knowledge gained from studies of the implementation of YEDPA programs indicates that the decision to enroll is influenced by several factors. Five main ones are treated here: (a) demographic and sociological characteristics, (b) the local labor market, (c) incentives attached to program participation, (d) program eligibility and entrance requirements, and (e) how potential enrollees and community members perceive the program. These factors are by no means exhaustive but they reflect significant considerations pertinent to the decision to enroll.

Demographic and Sociological Characteristics

It is well known that many minority youths do not complete high school. In 1978, for instance, the dropout[1] rate for 20 to 21 year old whites was 15% compared to 25% for Blacks and 39% for Spanish-origin youths (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1979). Yet, there is evidence that more poor Blacks than poor whites tend to remain in school. A baseline survey of disadvantaged youths conducted for the Entitlement Program found that 74% of the Blacks in

[1] The U.S. census defines dropouts as those persons who are not high school graduates or who have not been enrolled in school for two or more consecutive months.

the sample were enrolled in school as opposed to only 45% of their white counterparts.[2] Among Hispanics, the rate of school enrollment was 51%. Corroborating these findings to some degree, a comprehensive study of dropouts in an urban school district found that white youths tended to take more months to return to school than minority students (Wheeler & Finley, 1980).

The relatively low priority given to schooling by white students may reflect the fact that white youths have fewer difficulties in finding jobs than their minority counterparts. Becker's study (1979) of the factors affecting the occupational attainment of young Blacks found that prejudice and sterotyping enter into employment decision-making whenever information that employers would consider reliable (such as a high school diploma) is absent. Becker cites a survey conducted in 1967 of major employers in 15 large cities which found that between one-fifth and one-half of all personnel officers admitted that they believed Blacks were less reliable, more likely to engage in thievery, more likely to be intransigent, and less willing to accept authority than white workers.

The Entitlement survey found that 25% of disadvantaged females had at least one child. Most of the women with children were single and as many as 64% of them were heads of household. More Black women than Hispanics or whites were single mothers, and the differences across group were considerable (26% for Blacks, 17% for Hispanics, and 16% for whites). The survey also found that among disadvantaged 19-year-old females, 52% had at least one child (pp. 36-37).

Although the Entitlement survey did not report the years of education or school enrollment rates of disadvantaged females with children, such figures must be low. The most frequent reasons for leaving school among females were pregnancy and childbirth. Data from a national survey found that 56% of the white female dropouts and 62% of the Black female dropouts cited these reasons for leaving high school (Mott & Shaw, 1978). Once these women have children, their freedom to leave the home is seriously curtailed. A study of labor participation by low income women found that 75% did not seek employment due to child care difficulties. It also found that the availability of child care facilities in inner cities was far below the demand (Thomas, 1979). It seems logical that the same problems that prevent women from working outside the home would prevent them from attending school or training programs.

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[2] The survey (Barclay, Bottom, Farkas, Stromsdorfer, & Olsen, 1979) was conducted to gather baseline data for the Entitlement Demonstration Program. It used a sample of 6,500 disadvantaged youths between 16 and 19 years of age residing in seven sites, six of which were large urban areas and one rural. Disadvantaged youths were defined as those meeting the Entitlement eligibility criteria.

The family structures of disadvantaged youths are also different from those of their more advantaged peers. The Entitlement survey found that only 27% lived with both parents, 56% with their mother only, and 15% with neither parent. A study of children 1 to 14 years of age found that 85% of white children lived with both parents compared with only 43% of Black children (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1980). These proportions suggest that about twice as many disadvantaged youths live in incomplete family settings as non-disadvantaged youths.

Family structures have important consequences for youth participation in schooling. The Entitlement survey discovered that while 74% of disadvantaged youths living with both parents attended schools, 69% of those living with their mothers did, and 59% of those living with their fathers did. When disadvantaged youths lived alone, their participation in school was only 47%. It appears that complete nuclear families either encourage their children to remain in school or provide the economic support that makes school attendance possible.

It also appears that the family environments of disadvantaged youths are not conducive to high educational aspirations. This contention is supported by the fact that two-thirds of the high school dropouts have family heads who themselves never finished high school (Dearman & Plisko, 1979).

The importance of demographic and sociological characteristics has been strongly felt in the implementation of YEDPA programs. All programs had a predominantly Black enrollment. In Entitlement, the proportion was 84%; in the CIP it ranged from 58 to 99%, depending on the site. YCS, which operated in a predominantly white community, also had a majority of Black enrollees (57%).

Not surprisingly, there has been a higher rate of participation among youth without children than among those with children. Data from the Entitlement program showed that while 15% of those eligible for the program had at least one child, only 5% of those who enrolled had children.

There are no comparative data showing the proportion of women with children who enrolled in YEDPA programs. It is known, however, that the enrollment of women has been slightly larger than that of males. Women have represented 52% of the enrollment in Entitlement, 54% in the YCS, and 50% in the CIP. Between 15 and 25% of the female CIP participants had children, and child care services had to be obtained by program staff members. On the other hand, the lack of readily available child care services dissuaded others from participation. CIP recruiters estimate that between 10% and 15% of those youths who failed to enroll in the program were women with small children. In the case of women with children participating in the YCS program, attending school represented a significant economic sacrifice, as the stipend enrollees received was reportedly not

sufficient to pay for day care in addition to other household expenses.

The predominantly Black enrollment in YEDPA programs suggests either that Black youths are much more likely than their white counterparts to see work-oriented programs as a reasonable avenue to better jobs or that Black youths are more of a captive audience for these programs. The fact that so few youths with children enrolled indicates that the programs did not take into account the financial and child care needs prevalent among the target population. The relatively high proportion of female participants suggests that, having fewer options available to them, women are more likely than men to try socially approved means for enhancing their social status.

Labor Market Conditions

The impact of labor market forces upon disadvantaged youths has been studied systematically only in recent years. It is known, however, that the youth labor force is highly sensitive to the expansion or contraction of the economy. Mangum and Walsh (1978) observed that:

> During a period of declining employment, the male teenage labor force participation decreases by 3% points with each 1% point increase in the unemployment rate, while the decrease for female teenagers is even more pronounced.... As jobs become available, the opposite situation prevails. (pp. 20-21)

Data from the YEDPA programs revealed that the participation by disadvantaged youths in both school and training programs is clearly affected by the local market environment. The Entitlement baseline survey found that in a site characterized by an expanding economy, 70% of the economically disadvantaged youths spent fewer than 30 hours per week in school. In contrast, at a rural site lacking job opportunities, 70% of the disadvantaged spent more than 30 hours per week at school (Barclay et al., 1979, p. 51). The subsequent implementation of Entitlement showed that cities with high teenage unemployment reported a greater enrollment of those eligible than cities with low teenage unemployment. For instance, Baltimore--with a 23% teenage unemployment rate--enrolled 50% of those eligible, compared to Denver--with a 14% teenage unemployment rate--which enrolled 36% of those eligible (Diaz, Ball, Jacobs, Solnick, & Widman, 1980, pp. 58-59).

Data from Detroit, a city with high unemployment but with a cyclical demand for unskilled jobs, further illustrate the effects of the labor market on the youths' decision to participate in YEDPA programs. Both the Entitlement and the CIP operated in Detroit; and their implementations showed that even programs with substantially

different incentives were similarly affected by the local economic contexts. CIP recruiters found that many out-of-school youths felt it was easy to obtain jobs at the automotive factories. A common comment was that "a good deal of money can be made in a few months" in the factories. Not surprisingly, the CIP in Detroit reported the largest disparities between the numbers of youths contacted and those who eventually enrolled. Less than one of every 10 youths contacted in person or by telephone decided to participate in the CIP. For their part, Entitlement personnel reported a similar experience. Given the eligible pool, they had anticipated an enrollment of 6,000, of whom 2,000 were expected to be out-of-school youths. Actual enrollment by the target date was 3,975, or 66% of the anticipated enrollment. Moreover, only 4% of those enrolled were out-of-school youths, a finding that supports the notion that labor conditions have their most dramatic input on the participation of actual dropouts.

Incentives Attached to Participation in YEDPA Programs

Data from the YEDPA programs do not enable one to determine whether the greater participation in some programs was due to their superior incentives or to better recruitment strategies. It appears, however, that regardless of the factors at work, enrollment rates were lower among out-of-school youths than among those still attending regular high schools. It is also evident that the longer youths had been away from school, the more reluctant they were to enroll in any of the YEDPA programs.

The implementation of the Entitlement program showed that, while one-third of the eligible youths were not attending school, only 8% of those who enrolled in Entitlement belonged to this category (Ball, Diaz, Leiman, Mandell, & McNutt, 1979, p. 43). The incentive of a guaranteed wage-producing job was seemingly not enough to get the dropouts to return to school. The program, in fact, found that the few out-of-school youths who enrolled were reluctant to re-enter regular schools. Reportedly, the "vast majority" of them "requested that they not be placed in regular institutions" (Ball et al., 1979, pp. 147-148). Consequently, two-thirds of them were placed in GED programs. Further, in cities where YETP programs were also available, dropouts typically preferred them because they did not require full-time school attendance.

Data from Job Corps evaluations provide a parallel finding. Most of the Job Corps enrollees (who, according to program eligibility criteria, were supposed to be dropouts) stated they joined the program because of its job or job-training feature rather than its academic component.

The CIP, which offers a combined career and academic orientation, has been able to attract substantially more out-of-school youths (44% of its enrollment) than Entitlement. Part of the CIP's

success in this regard can be attributed to the fact that it is managed by a CBO. Another factor, however, is its alternative educational setting and the expectation that participants can obtain a high school diploma. Many young people are aware that the GED does not have the same social value as a high school diploma--"Employers don't bother to talk to you if you have a GED"--and specifically indicate that this diploma is a major objective for them.

To understand the regular high school's lack of appeal, one must look at the reasons youths cite for dropping out. Although studies in this area leave much to be desired in terms of scientific rigor, there is evidence that some youths find the curriculum irrelevant, that the school does not meet their individual needs, that they were experiencing academic failure, and that they felt alienated in a formal setting. Often, dropout youths are simply reported as "disliking" the school, their classes, and teachers. Other youths leave the school because of personal problems, such as pregnancy, economic pressures, and language difficulties (Dingle Associates, 1978; New York City Public Schools, 1979; Wheeler & Finley, 1980; Washington Research Project, 1974).

Data from the CIP implementation indicate that many of the out-of-school youths who joined the program perceived their experience in the regular high school either as a "boring" experience where "teachers did not care," "counselors were very hard to reach," and students would "hang out" in halls and yards, or as a violent experience where fights in classrooms and cafeterias were commonplace. Some youths, in fact, acknowledged having engaged in "school hopping" for several years, trying to find a good school and to avoid "getting sucked into the wrong crowd."

A positive feature of the CIP, for both actual and potential dropouts, was its "alternative school" nature, which made it possible to receive individualized instruction; constant academic, career, and personal counseling; and to be in a small program with small classes. A typical comment by CIP interns was:

> I know everybody here. You know your teachers better. If you have a problem, your counselors are right here. At [previous high school] you'd have to make an appointment weeks in advance to see your counselor. The teachers have time for you here. They care. I've gotten more work done here than at the high school.

Among potential dropouts--that is to say, youths currently enrolled in school but likely to leave it because of attendance, performance, or discipline problems--it appears that the personalized treatment afforded by the small alternative schools is very important. Interviews with CIP students who were potential dropouts

reveal they enjoy the close contact the program allows between students and instructors, and students and counselors. Since the average CIP class contained no more than 15 students and the average counselor/student ratio was approximately 1 to 30, the high school setting with classes having 30 to 40 students and an average counselor/student ratio of 1 to 349 (Abramowitz & Tenenbaum, 1978) was viewed as significantly less attractive. Studies on the implementation of Exemplary-in-School programs report that alternative high schools are found appealing by dropout youths who, having failed in the regular high school, see the alternative school as their last chance (Rist, Hamilton, Holloway, Johnson, & Wilterberger, 1979, p. 45). Alternative high schools are also said to appeal to pregnant women who, by attending a different school, avoid being harassed by old friends (ibid; pp. 120-121).

The majority of out-of-school youths seem to prefer job training to an academic setting, and they prefer job experiences that allow them to perform work tasks compatible with their occupational interests. Data from the YCS program offer support for this contention. This program--which offered a limited amount of academic training but emphasized a carefully matched job experience with a great deal of occupational training in a real job situation--attracted an enrollment of which 35% were out-of-school youth. In contrast, the Entitlement program operating in the same city appealed to very few out-of-school youths. Only 2% of its enrollees were dropouts (Diaz, et al., 1980, p. 69). Further evidence that few dropouts are interested in academic pursuits is the fact that, while the YCS program offered instruction leading to a GED, only 10% of the enrollees participated in this component. Findings from Job Corps evaluations, likewise, indicated that participants (85% of whom were out-of-school youths) did not elect to participate in its instructional program: only 11% of the enrollees obtained a GED (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 1980).

The preference of out-of-school youth for job training over academic pursuits seems tied to at least three factors. First, the problem of reentry into the classroom is a serious one. CIP instructors have noted that, "potential dropouts are ready to start with academics. With one-, two-year dropouts, lots of effort is necessary to keep them in place." For individuals who failed in school or who left it because they did not like it, going back to the classroom, particularly if it is a traditional one, has little appeal.

A second factor is that many enrollees had been unsuccessful in previous attempts to find employment. A study of the Job Corps reports that:

> Almost all Corpsmembers had experienced difficulties in obtaining and holding jobs; moreover, when they did find work, the jobs usually did not pay well. Over one-third of the enrollees

> never had a job at which they worked at least twenty hours per week and which lasted for at least one month. In the six months before enrolling in Job Corps, the typical Corpsmember was employed less than one-third of the time and averaged fewer than 12.5 hours of work per week at a wage rate ($2.81) that was only slightly above the federal minimum (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 1980, p. 10).

Numerous out-of-school youths enrolled in the CIP also reported having held only very menial and temporary jobs. They stated that their job experience had taught them how important it was to "get an education" to find good jobs. Dropouts enrolled in other programs, however, clearly chose the more directly relevant job training component over the less relevant academic instruction.

The third and final factor is that there are few vocational or apprenticeship opportunities for dropouts. A survey of training options available to dropouts in an urban area found that 84% of the city's vocational institutions (in industrial, technical, trade, and service areas) would not admit students without a high school diploma or a GED. The same study found that only four of 10 unions surveyed would take dropouts. Of these four, two required employment as a condition for admittance, and a third would not take youths under 18 (Wheeler & Finley, 1980). If the conditions reported by this survey are common, the training features of YEDPA programs represent a rare opportunity for out-of-school youths seeking job training.

Overall, the YEDPA experience has shown that dropouts are considerably less likely to enroll than in-school youths. The Entitlement program reported that 92% of its enrollees were youths already in school. In the case of the YCS 64% of the enrollees either had their high school diploma or were attending high school. In the CIP, 56% of the enrollees had been attending the high school before transferring to the CIP.

There are several plausible explanations for the greater propensity of in-school youths to participate. It has already been noted that the in-school youth does not have to make a major adjustment to his or her life style upon enrolling. Also, in-school youths have peers at school and so may welcome a program that allows them to continue these friendships. More importantly, in-school youths tend to live either with parents or guardians; thus, they enjoy more financial support. Contrasting in-school youths with those out of school, a CIP recruiter noted:

> Many dropout youths over 18 depend on their own income to live and they cannot afford to go to school full-time. Only those with parents can afford to do so. We have lost between 60% and

> 65% who cannot enroll because they are working and need to support themselves. There are so many boarding houses around here. We meet youths who live in rooms and must pay for them.

The findings discussed above suggest that the incentives present in youth programs are only marginally effective in attracting out-of-school youths back into regular academic settings. They have a strong preference for programs that offer them a work experience in line with their interests. The success of the CIP in appealing to out-of-school youths indicates, however, that many of these individuals are willing to return to academic settings provided they are of an alternative nature. Alternative academic/career settings also appear to appeal to many students in traditional school programs.

Program Eligibility and Entrance Requirements

Although eligibility requirements were intended to guarantee that programs would serve only their target group, they have had negative repercussions among prospective enrollees. Disadvantaged youths who learn about the existence of work-oriented programs and express an initial curiosity about them are easily discouraged. Perceived difficulties with "eligibility requirements," "enrollment procedures," and "testing" can quickly turn these young people away from the program.

Of the work-oriented programs considered here, Entitlement has the most cumbersome eligibility requirements. Enrollees must meet at least five criteria before they can be accepted, and all of these require "documented evidence."[3] As a result, some Entitlement sites experienced three- to four-week turnaround times for verification of eligibility (Ball et al., 1979, p. 227). While no data are yet available regarding the attrition between recruitment and enrollment, informal reports frequently mentioned the reluctance of target youths to engage in detailed paperwork.

Data from the Service Mix program, which had a somewhat simpler set of eligibility criteria than Entitlement, are pertinent. In one instance, applications from 840 youths eligible on the basis of income resulted in a pool of only 393 applicants who met the other

[3] These criteria included evidence of residency in the target area, citizenship, age, school enrollment, economic disadvantage, and (when applicable) approved participation by juvenile or criminal justice authorities.

eligibility criteria[4] (Broward Employment and Training Administration, n.d.[b], p. 11). In this case, other eligibility criteria reduced the pool of qualified youths by 53%.

The requirement that youths read at a minimum grade level also decreases enrollment. Youths' inability to read at the sixth-grade level was listed as one of the major factors affecting enrollment in the Service Mix program (Broward Employment and Training Administration, n.d.[b], p. 17). As a consequence, the program was given permission to lower the reading requirement to the fourth-grade level for up to 10% of its enrollees. The CIP, which had accepted students at the fifth-grade level of reading in its first two cohorts, also had to accept students with lower reading levels in order to meet enrollment quotas. The problem was particularly severe at one site, where the program reported that LEA administrators "believed [the CIP] standards for reading achievement were too high," since average "reading scores for [regular] eleventh graders" in the region where the CIP operated were "at about the fifth-grade level."[5]

Because the YEDPA legislation also sought to gain new knowledge as to the effectiveness of its programs, youths seeking admission had to take long batteries of tests and, in the case of the CIP, face the possibility of being placed in control groups. In the CIP experience, many potential candidates were discouraged by the four- to five-hour testing session and some simply left during breaks. Further many did not apply for admission because of the uncertainty associated with being assigned to the treatment group even after passing the reading test.

The Service Mix program also reported a reluctance of target group members to participate in "experiments." A large number of students left the program when they were randomly assigned to different working sites that often presented commuting difficulties (Broward Employment and Training Administration, n.d.[b], p. 19). In this case also, research needs were clearly in conflict with service needs.

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[4]Criteria for the Service Mix program included sixth-grade level reading, currently employed or underemployed, ages 16-21, and limited prior CETA participation.

[5]On the other hand, it must be noted that work-oriented programs attract youths with widely different abilities in basic skills. In the case of the CIP, several enrollees attained very high scores on the entrance reading tests. Some of these youths subsequently found the program curriculum materials "too easy" for them. This suggests that programs designed for this target group need to recognize the very wide range of initial achievement levels in the basic skills.

In summary, the eligibility and entrance requirements associated with the YEDPA programs decreased the pool of enrollees. The loss of potential recruits, however, was also caused by the fragile commitment made by the youths. Data from four different programs support this assertion.

Early data on the Job Corps (1968) showed that 30% of those who signed up for the program never reported to their assigned centers and that 24% of those who appeared at the centers quit within 30 days (Levitan & Johnston, 1975). The initial high dropout rates within the program were attributed to the residential nature of the program, but when Job Corps sites were established close to the neighborhoods of the enrollees, the high rates persisted.

The YCS attracted many applicants, yet program personnel soon discovered a "serious difficulty" in getting the applicants to attend the initial orientation (ACTION, 1979, p. 38). An early study of YCS found that only 45% of its applicants had completed orientation. While 2,700 youths had applied, only 1,384 enrolled. The program also experienced about 8% attrition during the orientation period, even though it lasted only 3.5 days. Reducing orientation to three half-day sessions produced no substantive reduction in the attrition rate (ACTION, 1979, p. 39); however, shortening the period between application and intake to one week did reduce attrition between recruitment and enrollment. Before the staggered intake, only 45% of the applicants completed orientation; with new intake procedures, 56% did.

The CIP also experienced high attrition rates between recruitment and pre-admission testing. The average was 57% across sites, with the most severe losses occurring in the site with an expanding job market. Attrition rates averaging 44% were also noted between the youths' intake testing and enrollment. These losses were partially attributed by program staff to either the initial strategy of waiting until at least 15 youths could be assembled before testing them and the "fixed intake," which made it necessary to have a minimum number of youths before starting a new cycle of classes. However, when changes in these testing and intake procedures were made, attrition continued to be sizeable. Under the new procedures, the average attrition between recruitment and testing was 42% and that between testing and enrollment 52%.

High attrition rates between recruitment and enrollment were also reported by the Service Mix program, which found that only 71% of the youths who filled out program applications and met the eligibility requirements, "formally completed the intake process... and attended at least one day of their work assignment" (Broward Employment and Training Administration, n.d.[b], p. 11).

Program Perceptions by Enrollees

YEDPA programs, popularly characterized as being addressed to "disadvantaged" youths, have not usually been perceived in a very favorable light by at least some groups that could benefit from them. Current data on the YEDPA programs, for example, as well as earlier data on the Job Corps, reveal significant disparities between the proportion of whites and Blacks that are eligible for the programs and the proportion that enroll. Job Corps data for 1977 found that, while more than half of the disadvantaged youths aged 14-21 were white, less than one-third of its enrollees were white. The majority of Job Corps participants were ethnic minorities, of whom Blacks represented 61% and Hispanics 14% (Office of Youth Programs, 1979).

The same sort of relationships were observed in the Entitlement program where larger percentages of eligible Blacks than whites enrolled. While the Entitlement survey reported that 76% of the eligibles were Black, Blacks accounted for 84% of the enrollees. In contrast, though 16% of the eligibles were white, only 8% of the enrollees were white. Among Hispanics, there was a close agreement between eligibles (8%) and enrollees (7%) (Ball et al., 1979, p. 82).

In the YCS, despite strong efforts by program administrators to describe the program as "open to all youths regardless of economic status or background" (ACTION, 1978), self-selection on the basis of ethnicity also occurred. After operating for nine months, 57% of the YCS enrollment was Black and 3% Hispanic. There was also self-selection by economic status. Although neither YCS nor the CIP employed income as an eligibility criterion, nearly all enrollees in both programs came from low-income households.

Data from the CIP also indicate a high proportion of Black youths (78%) compared to whites (14%) and other minorities (8%). In two of the sites, the population composition explained the predominantly Black enrollment, but in the other two it did not. Moreover, personnel in the latter two sites reported that white youths, particularly in-school youths, visited the program and talked to staff and students, although very few of them actually enrolled.

Program perceptions by white youths deter them from participating in work-oriented programs. These programs carry the social stigma of being known as "poverty programs" or programs for "dropouts" and "troubled youths" (Ball et al., 1979; ACTION, 1979; Treadway et al., 1979). As these programs are shunned by white youths they become increasingly minority and often mostly Black. Once the programs are Black, this fact in itself dissuades white youths from enrolling. The Entitlement implementation found white youths did not seek enrollment because they perceived the program as a "Black program" (Ball et al., 1979). In one CIP site, counselors reported that white students did not join the program because they felt "outnumbered."

In the two sites where both Entitlement and CIP operated, some "potential dropouts" preferred to stay in their regular school and participate in the Entitlement program rather than enroll in the CIP. One reason for this choice (in addition to the financial incentive) was that the CIP was perceived as a "dropout" or a "dumping ground" school. Several CIP interns reported that this was the perception of some of their peers and, in a few cases, of their own parents--who had to be convinced otherwise.

Another major perception affecting youth enrollment has been connected with the "demonstration" nature of the programs. Many federally sponsored programs have a reputation for being "experiments" that use young people as "guinea pigs." Interview data from the CIP suggest that many residents in the program neighborhood generally distrusted federal programs. "We have seen them come and go; you just get involved, you know, and the damn thing's gone.... What do you expect from us, that we should jump right in? We're tired of being ripped off" (Treadway et al., 1979, p. 95).

In the CIP, the experimental design used in the evaluation clearly had a negative impact among the youths placed in the control groups. All CIP sites reported that significant numbers of potential applicants lost interest when told they might be placed in a control group even though they met all entrance criteria. As one site director said:

> It turns people off. It makes us seem like another social experiment--here today, gone tomorrow, and not really interested in helping people, just in using them as guinea pigs. Some kids come here after they get the rejection letter and beg to be let in. They say this was their last chance, and it might have been. It just tears me up. And it doesn't make the program look too good either. How can we come in here talking about helping people, turning lives around, and do that. If we had more kids applying than places [for them], it might not be so bad, but I still would hate shutting them out. With room in the program I can't justify it to anybody, including myself.

The community-based organization responsible for implementing the CIP also felt that its credibility as a service-oriented agency was damaged by the need to deny some applicants entry into the program "in the name of science." From the viewpoint of LEA administrators, the formation of control groups created an awkward situation because, in at least some instances, they had identified students and contacted their parents under the assumption that alternative educational treatments would be offered to all of them. One CIP recruiter summarized his experience thus:

> The fact that the young man or woman cannot enroll immediately presents a problem. The time between recruitment and enrollment and the possibility that they may not be admitted...they see it as "I have no chance to get admitted" or "I am being used as a pawn." Only those who are in dire distress think of coming to the program. The procedures for entrance are so complicated that young people turn off. These youths have been turned off by education. Then, you tell them, "This is a setting that will benefit you." Then, you make it difficult to come in.

> The individual who's out of school is not going to spend lots of time waiting for an answer regarding his admission. While that person is waiting, he's looking around and if something comes up, he'll take it.

A factor related to the "demonstration" nature of the programs is that, by definition, these programs are new to the community and, in consequence, need time to become accepted. The CIP experience showed that the most effective proof that the program "worked" was producing graduates other youths knew. Recalling the process of introducing the program to the community, a CIP staff member said:

> They didn't know what the program was all about. Fliers are read but they don't mean a thing. The students have a very normal fear. They have been in a permanent relation with the local school. They don't quite understand how the transfer takes place. You have to see the program. You have to show how the program is going to benefit them. That's not something you do easily; it's something that takes time.

That time in the community and graduates help acceptance of the program was indeed attested to in the case of the CIP. This program, in each of the four sites, registered an increased enrollment with each successive cohort. While the initial enrollments had been very small--ranging from 23 to 54 enrollees--they more than doubled after two years of program operation. At the end of the demonstration of the program, when requirements for control groups were dropped, enrollment increased even more.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined five factors affecting the decision of young people to participate in YEDPA programs. Though, at first sight, these factors seem removed from the implementation process, it has been argued that they play an important role.

A large number of disadvantaged youths live alone or with only one parent; and many have children of their own. As a result, they face economic and social conditions that make their participation in training and academic programs a more difficult course of action to follow than other alternatives open to them.

The economic incentive offered by some of these programs attracted mostly in-school youths, many of whom still live with their parents. Those out of school, who usually enroll in YEDPA programs after unsuccessful attempts to find employment, seemed to be attracted primarily by the job training features of some programs.

The decision to enroll in work-oriented programs represents a very fragile commitment by the youths. Complex and/or restrictive eligibility and entrance requirements contribute to weaken this commitment. Although the requirements were intended simply to ensure that youths for whom the program was intended would be those who were served, they had the unanticipated effect of discouraging a large number from enrolling.

The perception of these programs as serving primarily dropouts or minorities, and as being one-shot "experiments" rather than service providers, has further deterred young people from participating.

The data available from the YEDPA programs are insufficient to determine the independent impact of each of the five client-related factors examined. It is clear, however, that they are important and that they often operate simultaneously. Two of the factors--demographic and sociological characteristics--are beyond the control of program designers. These factors, however, can be taken into account when developing programs to help disadvantaged youth. For instance, if out-of-school youths appreciate the opportunity for tailored, well-designed job training, program designers should put a premium on quality rather than quantity. If as many women as men participate in work-oriented programs despite their child care needs, even greater participation could be expected in programs with built-in child care and baby sitting services.

The other three factors--incentives offered by work-oriented programs, program eligibility and entrance requirements, and the youths' perceptions of the programs--are more amenable to improve through policy changes. As will be seen in later chapters, it is in these areas that work must be done to produce programs of greater access and appeal to the intended clients.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES RELATED TO PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

This chapter examines the second set of forces affecting implementation; namely, those tasks that are undertaken by program administrators to put their respective programs in place. This study considers five such administrative tasks: (a) recruitment activities, (b) relations with local school districts, (c) the provision of work experience, (d) coordination with community agencies and firms, and (e) staff selection and training.

Recruitment Activities

One of the most difficult tasks facing YEDPA program implementors has been to attract enough youths to fill enrollment quotas. During the first year, all programs fell below their targets by significant amounts. Moreover, they had to work very hard to obtain the youths they did.

The recruitment experience of program administrators revealed that problems emerged in identifying the target youths, with contacting potential enrollees, and with the procedures used to produce enrollment estimates.

Identifying Target Youths. The target population of YEDPA was clearly specified: economically and educationally disadvantaged youths. Concretely, this meant youths from low income families ("low" being determined by DOL guidelines), unemployed, and "potential" or "actual" high school dropouts.

Identifying eligible youths turned out to be an activity that required extensive and constant cooperation from community groups. Local organizations, such as employment service agencies and local school districts, were indispensable in the identification process.

It was easy to identify youths from low-income families when these families were receiving social services (AFDC, employment disability, social security benefits, etc.). In these instances, local social service officers could provide referrals. But low-income families not registered with social service agencies were considerably harder to identify. Unemployed youths were relatively easy to locate if they were registered with state employment agencies; otherwise, they were not.

Program staff in every YEDPA program had to rely on informal, verbal networks to identify youths who were from low-income families or out of work. This process inevitably made identification slow. Entitlement staff, discouraged by the difficulties in identifying these youths, decided to concentrate in the more easily identifiable in-school youths. The CIP--being affiliated with a community-based organization--succeeded in identifying a substantial proportion of out-of-school youths.

LEA performance in the identification of "actual" and "potential" dropouts was generally slow and not very effective. As is discussed below, the LEAs showed greater cooperation identifying "actual" than "potential" dropouts.

Legal and technical problems interfered with the LEA's identification of "actual" dropouts. Since in many states high school attendance is compulsory until age 16, LEAs cannot consider youths below this age as actual dropouts, but only as truants (Mandel & Solnick, 1979). The consequence of these laws for YEDPA implementation was that youths no longer attending school but within the compulsory age could not be removed from school rolls.

In addition, LEAs used varying criteria for determining who was a dropout. Some used a criterion of consecutive absences, while others looked at cumulative absences over a given period of time or considered as dropouts those who failed to re-register for the next term. For these reasons, different LEAs produced dropout lists at different times during the school year, and these lists varied in precision depending on their recency.

The identification of "potential" dropouts proved even more difficult, although some programs had less trouble with this task than others. Two major problems emerged with identifying potential dropouts.

The first problem was one of definition--or perhaps more accurately, lack of definition. The identification of potential dropouts was a matter generally left to school counselors. The criteria they used were idiosyncratic, with each counselor tending to emphasize different academic or personal problems, depending on the particular case in question. Poor attendance, low grades, few credits accumulated toward graduation, and disciplinary and personal problems were prominant among the decision criteria, but because counselors were the sole identifiers of potential dropouts, the process was slow and the nominations uncontestable. YEDPA program operators could do little except abide by the counselors' decisions and wait for their referrals.

The second problem in the identification of potential dropouts was the reluctance of LEA staff--particularly in the early months of implementation--to remove students from the high school and refer them to a rival program. For some LEA personnel, referring students to other programs was tantamount to admitting that the public school was not meeting their needs, Other school staff were simply afraid of losing students and thus having instructors laid off in their district. Still other personnel, particularly counselors, had doubts about the effectiveness of the CIP as an alternative program.

The YEDPA experience showed that schools played a major role in the identification of potential dropouts. Schools identified two-thirds of those who enrolled in Entitlement. Schools were also the

main source of referrals for the CIP. The crucial role of the school in identifying potential dropouts was dramatically revealed during the summer months, when recruitment was almost impossible because the schools were closed. This problem affected Entitlement, CIP, and School-to-Work programs, all of which initiated their activities out of phase with the public school calendar.

Contacting Potential Enrollees. In addition to problems of identification, there were serious problems associated with reaching youths to solicit their applications for enrollment.

Notwithstanding the LEA reluctance to cooperate, it was much easier to reach potential dropouts than actual dropouts. Potential dropouts--being still at school--could be contacted through internal communications, group meetings, or personal interviews at the school. Minor problems of access occurred since some schools did not allow program staff to recruit in the building, but others were more receptive to recruiting activities.

In contrast to in-school youths, it was not possible to contact those who had dropped out in a central, easily accessible place--as program implementors soon discovered. The CIP experience showed that the involvement of many staff members, typically on a full-time basis in the initial periods, was needed in order to contact significant numbers of out-of-school youths. Program personnel had to go into the street and canvass discos and other places where young people congregate. The CIP experience also demonstrated advantages community-based groups have in reaching out-of-school youths. Since established CBOs tend to be familiar with their communities, they know where out-of-school youths usually gather (corners, stores, pool rooms, parks, etc.) and can use their informal networks to contact them. As noted earlier, the CIP--run by a well recognized CBO--was able to recruit enough out-of-school youths to make up 44% of their enrollment, a very high proportion compared to programs run without active CBO involvement.

Programs that fared relatively well in making themselves known in the community were those that used a variety of methods including fliers, newspapers, radio, TV, public presentations, and word-of-mouth advertising.

Using a "scatter gun" approach to recruitment, YCS was able to recruit both potential and actual dropouts in significant numbers. Its recruitment method consisted of a comprehensive and intensive advertising effort--including posters, brochures, T-shirts, radio and TV announcements in "targeted radio time," and neighborhood advertising (ACTION, 1978, p. 36). A similar experience was registered by the CIP where use of diverse recruitment methods and the combining of personal and mass-media approaches yielded substantial numbers of both in-school and out-of-school youths.

Various YEDPA programs showed that use of the mail was simply not effective. YCS found that 8 to 10% of the target youths could not be reached in this fashion. The program staff was of the opinion that the high proportion of returned letters occurred because postmen were reluctant to deliver letters unless the name of the addressee was the same as that on the mailbox (as many youths lived with guardians and other adults, names did not match).

CIP personnel also found that use of the postal service was impractical because the rate of returned mail was also high. Since CIP staff members used actual dropout lists from the high school for most of their mail, they concluded that school personnel did not bother to update the lists and that the addresses were obsolete.

In contrast to written messages, verbal forms of communication were found to be very effective. Data from Job Corps enrollees--the majority of whom read at or below the sixth-grade level--showed that 63% of the enrollees learned about the program through friends or relatives. The official Job Corps recruitment channel, referral by the U.S. Employment Service, performed very poorly by comparison, yielding only 17% of the enrollment. This finding suggests that verbal communication has more impact when it comes from close sources. Printed materials were still less productive, accounting for only 11%. Referrals from schools, probation, and other agencies accounted for 9% of the enrollment (Levitan & Johnson, 1975).

A similar preference of youth for verbal rather than written communication was observed in the case of the CIP. The best source of referrals was the peer group--either graduates, current participants in the program, or their relatives. The influence of peers was also important in the case of Entitlement programs, where friends accounted for one-third of the referrals of the out-of-school youths (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1979). Probation agencies continue to be a significant source of referrals in YCS and, to a lesser extent, in the CIP.

Although program implementors seemed surprised that verbal means were more effective than written ones, the YEDPA experience merely confirmed previous findings. Studies by Becker (1977 & 1979) found that youths, both Black and white, relied more on friends and relatives than they did on newspapers for information about available job opportunities. He also found that poor whites had more information about jobs because they had friends, relatives, and contacts from prior jobs that cut across class boundaries. In contrast, the social networks of poor Blacks were much narrower. Becker noted that,

> Completely apart from class, we have much within-class segregation in employment, housing, and schooling. Combined with the lower level of job resources in the Black community, the racial

> segregation that exists erects further barriers that prevent informational opportunities from reaching the majority of Black youths in search of employment (1979, pp. 13-14).

These findings have been corroborated in the studies by Parnes and Kohen (1976), who found that white youths had greater access to a variety of organizations and personal contacts than Black youths. They concluded that Black youths needed more sponsorship to get jobs. This is, in fact, what CBOs can provide by virtue of their expanded contacts in the community.

The experiences of both Entitlement and CIP show that program administrators were not adequately prepared for the difficulties they experienced in reaching potential recruits. The two programs reacted in different ways to the unexpected difficulty. When confronted with a low initial success with out-of-school youths, Entitlement personnel concentrated efforts on the more accessible and persuadable in-school youths (Ball et al., 1979). In contrast, CIP administrators mounted an all-out effort that involved the entire staff in door-to-door recruitment, contact with various community agencies, and an intensive use of mass media.

Findings with respect to the recruitment of disadvantaged, out-of-school youths suggest that their world is small and rather closed. They are difficult to reach with printed messages. Possibly because of their limited experience outside their immediate neighborhoods, they tended to respond to mass media communication only when presented in combination with more direct, person-to-person contact. The need for personal methods, all of them time consuming and labor intensive, made recruiting these youths a difficult activity.

Problems of Goal Estimates. The enrollment goals of work-oriented programs ranged from small to very large. The CIP had an anticipated enrollment of 300 youths per site during a two-year period. Entitlement sought enrollments of between 3,000 and 8,000 in seven sites and enrollments no greater than 1,000 in 10 additional sites over an 18-month period. YCS sought a 1,650 enrollment over a two-year period.

The enrollment goals of these programs were established on the basis of the estimated pool of eligibles. Yet all programs fell short of their goals, though enrollment increased over time. The CIP enrolled 783 by June 1979--65% of its goal. By the end of the demonstration, the program had enrolled 1,128 or 75% of its projected enrollment. Entitlement anticipated a peak enrollment of 35,000 youths by June 1978; the actual enrollment by that time was 29,747, or 88% of the estimate. The actual enrollment of YCS numbered 1,384, or 83% of the anticipated figure. Data from the Exemplary-in-School programs are not very clear, but they suggest that these programs also fell below projections; 20 of the

Exemplary-in-School met or exceeded projections by an average of 20%, but the remaining 30 programs fell below projections by an average of 38% (Rist et al., 1980). School-to-Work reported enrollments running approximately 50% below projections (MDC, 1980).

The causes of this short fall are numerous. On the one hand, there is a cluster of factors related to the youths' decision to participate or not (discussed earlier in Chapter III). On the other hand, there are factors related to the ability of program staff identifying and gaining access to target youths.

It seems that an additional problem in meeting enrollment goals arose because of overestimations in computing projected enrollments. First, enrollment projections were made on a very simplistic basis--merely by referring to the pool of high school dropouts in the community, or the number of unemployed youths in the community. This was the way in which both Entitlement and YCS computed their projections.[1]

It is clear, however, that sizeable decreases in the pool of disadvantaged youths occur as program eligibility criteria are applied. Job Corps data illustrate this reduction. After considering such criteria as "below poverty income," "not in school," and "not employed"--a nationwide pool of 3,092,000 high school dropouts was reduced to 347,000 youths--or about 11% of the original estimate. Moreover, since some of these youths lived in isolated rural areas, others were deterred by the residential nature of the program, and some were married women living with their husbands, the universe of eligibles for the Job Corps fell to under 200,000 (Levitan & Johnston, 1975).

Second, even when target youths were available in large numbers, issues of logistics were usually ignored. For instance, a feasibility study for one CIP reported an extensive pool of dropouts because the LEA had a high dropout rate and comprised 22 high schools. Although the CIP negotiated "city-wide" recruitment, recruiters discovered that only six schools were within a one-hour commuting time each way.

Third, because of the "demonstration" nature of YEDPA programs, special considerations were taken into account in the determination of enrollment goals. In the case of Entitlement, prime sponsors were encouraged to overestimate the number that would be served in the belief that it would be financially better to err in that direction than in the opposite (Ball et al., 1979, p. xxii). With CIP, the desire to examine student outcomes led to the specification

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[1]Since YEDPA programs began implementation in 1977, they faced an additional complication: their basic census data was seven years old.

of enrollment quotas large enough so that gains of the anticipated magnitude would be statistically significant. Thus, it was considerations relevant to the research design rather than estimates of the actual pool of eligibles that determined enrollment quotas. This procedure created special problems for one CIP site since the size of the community in which it was located was only 2% of that of the original pilot site (where an average of 250 youth per year had been served).

Relations with the LEA

Four of the selected YEDPA programs depended on LEAs for critical collaboration. The School-to-Work and Exemplary-in-School programs required LEAs to give students credit for their work experience and to modify class schedules in order to allow students to have outside jobs. The Entitlement program required LEAs to perform two additional tasks: re-enrolling out-of-school youths in the high school, and monitoring student attendance and academic performance on a monthly basis. To support the CIP, LEAs were not only to provide academic credit but also to identify actual and potential dropouts, approve the CIP curriculum, and grant high school diplomas to program graduates.

A lesson from YEDPA programs that were dependent on LEA support was that effective cooperation required much more than formal approval by school boards or superintendents. Several levels of administrative authority had to concur in each major decision: not only did top administrators have to be informed and supportive, but collaboration was also required from principals, district supervisors, teachers, and counselors. Obtaining the active support of all of these persons placed heavy demands on the time, initiative, and resourcefulness of program staff.

Program administrators were, in general, inexperienced in educational matters and thus unprepared for dealing with the LEAs. Entitlement was run mostly by CETA prime sponsors whose experience with community groups had centered almost exclusively on nonprofit and public agencies and firms. School-to-Work and Exemplary were usually administered by public or community-based organizations having little knowledge of LEA procedures and regulations. In the case of the CIP, the disseminators were familiar with LEA procedures in the site of the program prototype, but this knowledge proved insufficient in new communities.

As a result of the relative inexperience of program administrators and disseminators in dealing with LEAs, a number of significant problems emerged in the implementation process. These are discussed below.

LEA Prerogatives on Certification, Credit, and Curriculum. In the four programs mentioned above, the LEAs jealously guarded the

authority and rights given to them by state laws. Departures from established norms were few and mostly idiosyncratic.

The CIP anticipated that the LEAs would accept the alternative nature of the program and allow it to hire uncertified teachers and counselors. It soon found out that, while the LEAs showed flexibility with respect to the certification of counselors, they demanded that program instructors meet state requirements. The CIP and other programs had no choice but to employ instructional personnel who met state certification requirements.

All four programs sought academic credit for participants' work experiences. They found that, while the decision to grant credit rested solely with the LEA, there was considerable reluctance to endorse this concept.

Most LEAs hesitated to offer credit for job experience. Reporting on YCCIP and YETP programs Wurzburg states that only 5% of the programs had formalized agreements with LEAs whereby participants received academic credit for work experiences (1980, p. 9). Moreover, when credit was given for job experience or program participation, it was done only for "elective" courses (MDC, 1980).

Some LEAs that provided credit for work experiences were very generous, others were not. In the case of Entitlement, one LEA awarded one-half unit of academic credit for 132 hours of work; another LEA gave five credits for every 250 hours of work; yet another gave ten credits per semester provided the Entitilement participant attended school regularly (Ball et al., 1979, p. 144). Similar disparities in credit award were reported by Rist et al. (1980) for the Exemplary-in-School project and by MDC (1979) for the School-to-Work program.

The CIP also sought academic credit for the career experiences of the interns and all of the collaborating LEAs gave credit for the career-related knowledge imparted through a formal course (called the Career Counseling Seminar), but only one of eight LEAs gave credit for work experiences outside the classroom. From the program's perspective, failure to award credit for work experiences was damaging to one important feature of the program--that of offering a strong career emphasis.

In terms of the curriculum, YEDPA programs anticipated that the LEAs would be willing to modify their curriculum offerings to make room for more career-related instruction. This kind of flexibility was encountered only rarely, however. A sobering conclusion reached by Entitlement researchers was that, "There have not been any substantial adaptations by schools in curriculum or course offerings in response to Entitlement" (Diaz et al., 1980, p. 189). Similar LEA behaviors were reported for the School-to-Work (MDC, 1979, 1980) and Exemplary programs (Rist, Gillespie, Hamilton, Holloway, & Wiltberger, 1979).

In the CIP, program disseminators had developed a career-infused curriculum in five academic subjects. They anticipated that this curriculum would be used in conjunction with that of the collaborating LEA and would be fully accredited. Experience showed, however, that the LEAs made few such adjustments to accommodate the CIP curriculum. All LEAs supplied CIP staff with descriptions of their curricula and graduation requirements. They also made clear that compliance with these course specifications and requirements was expected. As noted above, only one LEA showed flexibility in the curriculum it would accept.

The YEDPA implementation revealed that the LEAs were not only reluctant to accept new courses into their curricula, but were also unwilling to modify their definition of what a "course" was. An essential part of the definition was that a course must involve a certain number of hours in the classroom (Carnegie units) and that the credit given for a course must be in direct proportion to the number of classroom hours.

This hour-bound definition of a course brought problems for most YEDPA programs. Entitlement reported that, in certain LEAs, the students could not participate in concurrent work experiences because their schools demanded that they be in school for a set number of hours each day. In one Entitlement program students were not allowed to leave the school early enough to complete the minimum of ten hours per week at job settings that operated during regular business hours (Ball et al., 1979, p. 231). Experiencing a similar experience, one Exemplary-in-School program reported:

> The major constraint in our project, in delivering services in a formalized environment--the actual setting of a high school, not a greenhouse setting set apart from the hustle of the real world--is that of meshing with the unit's schedule. And articulation with the schedule was a major limitation to our access to students, to the length of time he could devote in the center, to the time he could come to the center, and to the types of activities that he could do in the center (Rist et al., 1980, p. 172).

In accounting for the LEAs inflexibility regarding the curriculum, Entitlement researchers considered that the lack of funds and program instability were major reasons. The CIP experience revealed different reasons. Since the CIP presented no financial burden to the LEA, lack of funds was not an issue. Since the program was conducted outside the high school, program termination could not result in the LEA's offering courses for which students were no longer available. So instability was not an issue either.

Conversations with LEA administrators collaborating with the CIP indicated that school personnel felt responsible for the preparation of educated individuals and considered that academic credit should not be lightly given. It was frequently stated that if the alternative program were not "properly conducted," it would "cheapen the high school diploma." One administrator explained the LEA position in this way:

> We have very strict laws regarding graduation requirements. If we don't, we suffer censoring from the state. We are ending up becoming the heavy because we say to some students, "You can't graduate." The counselors there are not certified; they don't understand. When you deal with complex programs and law mandates you can get into real problems. We are not going to compromise standards for flexibility. We cannot add to our curriculum offerings a whole set of offerings that don't exist in our district.

Further dialogue with school administrators showed that they considered awarding credit for independent study or for knowledge gained in a job-related situation to represent a lowering of standards. They also felt that if students earned credit despite absences and tardiness during their school term standards would be even more seriously compromised. In the CIP experience, therefore, it was the LEA's reluctance to accept different educational standards rather than cost or other considerations that caused curriculum inflexibility.

Accountability of Student Academic Performance. Some of the accountability criteria in the YEDPA legislation were at odds with the internal procedures of regular schools. Entitlement regulations, for example, required participants to meet "minimum academic and attendance standards." But LEA standards in these areas were found subjective and disparate. Program administrators discovered that,

> problems [of attendance and academic performance] were normally handled on an individual basis between pupil, guidance counselor, and faculty. The requirement in the [YEDPA] guidelines that compliance with Entitlement standards must be verified monthly, in writing, further complicated the problem (Ball et al., 1979, p. 134).

To arrive at fixed definitions of "attendance standards" and "academic standards," prime sponsors had to negotiate laboriously with their respective LEAs. The parties did arrive at working definitions, but these varied significantly across sites. Standards for attendance ranged from 3 to 16 excused absences per semester.

Academic standards ranged from having passing grades in one to four subjects to having a C or a D average. While the establishment of these criteria enabled Entitlement program administrators to comply with the legislation, the criteria did not provide uniform indicators of student performance, which was presumably a key intent in seeking accountability. As it turned out, the main effect of setting attendance and academic performance standards was to create major inconveniences among LEA personnel (Ball et al., 1979).

Out-of-Phase School and Program Cycles. The implementation of YEDPA programs took place at times determined by schedules in the legislation and the receipt of federal funds at the program level. Coincidence between program and LEA schedules was a rare occurrence. Thus, lack of synchronization created implementation problems in the areas of recruitment, enrollment, course offerings, and job placements.

The fact that schools close during the summer posed problems with referrals and access to students who could participate in programs scheduled to begin in September. Both Entitlement and CIP found that it was most difficult to get LEA collaboration from June to August. Counselors, who are key identifiers of potential dropouts, were on vacation, and central office administrators had other priorities. In addition, since large LEAs receive state funds based on student counts made in mid-September, a program such as the CIP--which wanted school lists of actual dropouts--had to wait until the LEAs made their annual count of active students.

As YEDPA programs began operations, the out-of-phase program and school cycles created further problems. Several dropouts who wanted to enroll in the regular school could not because they came in during the mid-term. The School-to-Work program found that it was difficult to fit students into either job assignments or career-oriented classes. While the program received funding in April, the LEAs had begun their course scheduling process in January for the fall semester and the process was completed in May. Program administrators found that, in some cases, LEA course schedules were completed even before program sites had been identified (U.S. Employment Service, 1979).

Incentives for LEA Participation. That schools are not successful with all students is widely accepted. At the same time, the fact that substantial numbers of students drop out every year is not usually assumed to reflect a failure on the part of the school system itself. To some extent, these students are seen as problems who are better off in other settings. Some schools welcome the exit of disruptive or inattentive students, particularly if the schools are crowded, as is quite common in inner cities.

Given that these conditions apply to many LEAs, the question arises as to what incentives could motivate LEAs to participate in

programs that will keep problem students in school or bring them back? One major incentive has been economic. In 8 of the 17 Entitlement sites, the LEA has been involved as a co-contractor or subcontractor, and funds have been given to the LEA for helping with the program. Other YEDPA programs that operate in the school, including Exemplary-in-School and School-to-Work, provided staff to supplement tight LEA personnel budgets. In the case of CIP, the LEAs have benefitted by receiving state monies for students not served directly by the schools.

Another incentive for LEA collaboration has been that YEDPA programs provide services perceived as useful by school officials. In the case of School-to-Work, information on careers was brought to the high school and made available to all students--a service that was appreciated by school administrators. Several LEA administrators reacted positively to the presence of the CIP because, "We don't provide students with a career orientation. We are glad the CIP came along because there's nothing else we could have done for them."

A third incentive has been that teachers seeking new roles in nontraditional instruction have found an outlet to express themselves.

Disincentives for LEA Participation. Various characteristics and requirements of YEDPA Programs have acted as disincentives for school administrators. Among the most important of these issues are philosophical differences, practical considerations, and perceived threats to the status quo of the LEA or its personnel.

There have been three primary philosophical issues. First, some LEAs have felt that the YEDPA eligibility criteria, which limits participation to the economically disadvantaged, conflict with the school tradition of open service to all youths (Dingle Associates, 1978). Second, many LEAs are not particularly interested in serving dropouts. A finding from the Entitlement program was that many school administrators felt they did not have appropriate alternative programs for these youths, and that their "ages and attitudes [were] inappropriate to regular schooling" (Ball et al., 1979, p. 148). Third, LEAs expressed discomfort with the idea of paying students for remaining in school--as Entitlement does. Several school administrators expressed the opinion that paying Entitlement students is not a good idea because regular students are not equally rewarded (Dingle Associates, 1978, p. 9).

Disincentives of a practical nature are related to the time-consuming tasks of identifying potential dropouts (required by the CIP) and verifying attendance and academic performance (needed by Entitlement). Another practical disincentive is the realization that current YEDPA programs are subject to short and unstable funding. School administrators have been reluctant to install programs that may be dismantled in one or two years, or they have set up

these programs outside the mainstream of regular school programs (Wurzburg, 1980; MDC, 1979).

Disincentives affecting the LEA status quo have been few in number but strongly felt by program implementors. One such disincentive relates to the fear--both by LEAs and teachers' unions--that a new program will take students away from the regular schools and thus displace teachers. This fear resulted in LEA reluctance to cooperate in the case of School-to-Work (U.S. Employment Service, 1979) and CIP. LEAs have been willing to supply names of actual dropouts but are usually reluctant to provide lists of potential dropouts. A comment by a school principal cooperating with the CIP clearly illustrates the LEA position: "We gave [the CIP] a list of dropouts. They shouldn't be raiding our school. They should have been doing their own [recruiting] work."[2]

During CIP start-up activities, the fear of teacher layoffs caused the teacher union at one of the four sites to interfere with the CIP-LEA negotiations. The problem was resolved only when the CIP promised to hire union teachers in direct proportion to the enrollment of in-school students from the LEA.

In other programs, such as Entitlement and School-to-Work, there has been no fear of teacher displacement because the youths were supposed to enroll back in the school. Difficulty, if any, emerged because standing LEA-teachers' union agreements made hiring additional personnel (needed to help implement the work-oriented programs) a very slow process.

Another disincentive for the LEAs is their perception that the YEDPA legislation represents an attack on the adequacy of the public schools (Dingle Associates, 1978, p. 11). This perception is probably accurate since the YEDPA legislation--by sponsoring alternative delivery agents--implies that the schools and their curricula are not responsive to needs of disadvantaged youths.

CIP experiences suggest initial difficulties in obtaining the cooperation of the LEA can be overcome. The LEAs dealing with the CIP have helped not only by producing student referrals but also by providing supportive services, such as transportation, lunches, substitute personnel, facilities for physical education courses, and even limited quantities of textbooks and furniture. Only in the case where the teacher union demanded that no extra help be given to the CIP, was it denied.

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[2] This comment suggests that the principal may not have understood that the "raiding" of his school would be mutually beneficial. The school would keep the students on its roles (and receive state monies for serving them) while class sizes and teacher and counselor work loads would be decreased. The CIP would benefit in terms of being able to meet its enrollment quotas.

The Provision of Work Experiences

A basic objective of the YEDPA legislation concerns the provision of work experience. The purpose of such experience is "to provide youth, and particularly disadvantaged youth, with opportunities to learn and earn that will lead to meaningful employment or self-employment opportunities after they have completed the program" (YEDPA, Section 411).

The legislators' reference to "opportunities to learn and earn" has been variously interpreted by program implementors and evaluators. DOL's 1977 Knowledge Development Plan defined a meaningful work experience as one "having an impact on future careers" (p. 9). Wurzburg notes that, in its directives to program implementors, DOL has emphasized "the importance of linking work experience to training and school curricula" (1980, p. 24). Another interpretation has been that "any and all jobs created through YEDPA should have adequate supervision, involve work useful to the employee or community, and enhance youths' skills and career development" (Buttler & Darr, 1980). Yet another interpretation has been that the work experience should be matched to the interests and preferences of the participants.

The diverse interpretations of what a work experience is supposed to be have resulted in the provision of different types of work experiences. They have ranged from on-site observation of the selected occupation, to carefully selected on-the-job training situations, to thinly disguised subsidized employment with little occupational training.

Despite the variety of approaches tried by different program operators, all have made efforts in three areas: (a) matching jobs to youths' interests, (b) obtaining the participation of public and private employers, and (c) assessing the work experience of the youths. It is with respect to these areas, therefore, that the provision of work experiences is reviewed below.

Matching jobs to youths' interests. Data from the YEDPA programs indicate that finding the number of jobs needed for the work experience has not been problematic. Entitlement--by far the largest of the programs funded under YEDPA--found that the staff was "able to generate a pool of potential work sponsors with minimal trouble" (Ball et al., 1979, p. xx). CIP and YCS data show that these programs were also able to find the job slots needed.

While getting job slots has not been difficult, matching jobs to youths' interests proved to be a complex activity. Various factors contributed to the problem. First, because the work experience was the first one for some disadvantaged youths, they had very little knowledge of the world of work and were unsure as to what their interests were. A staff member from a School-to-Work program summarized his experience in this way:

> We found out very quickly that kids in the program all wanted to be social workers, or health professionals, or public defenders, or drug counselors, but nobody seemed interested in what's required to become a pipefitter or aircraft mechanic or loan officer for a commercial lending institution. What we discovered was that kids from the public housing projects already knew...or thought they knew...about all the jobs held by people they normally come into contact with--the social workers and other representatives of public agencies. And that's what they thought they'd want to do also. We soon realized that most of the kids had never seen what goes on inside a bank, or a public utility, or even the industrial plant a few blocks away.

A second problem in matching jobs to interests has been that many of the jobs of interest existed only in areas of the community that were not easily accessible. This occurred in several large cities where youths could not accept job experiences or attended sporadically because of transportation difficulties. Since the program enrollees have very low incomes, they are dependent on public transportation. It follows, of course, that job sites must be close to bus or subway routes and that commuting times and complexity must not be too demanding.[3]

Finally, matching could be done only to the extent that the selected occupations were not affected by labor union agreements, confidentiality, or insurance constraints. CIP personnel found that the fields of accounting, law, and medicine could provide few work experiences because of the services they provide. Occupations that are relatively dangerous (such as electrician and policeman) or

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[3]This is a chronic problem that affects disadvantaged youths as well as adults. A recent study by DOL's Bureau of Labor Statistics (Wescott, 1979) found that lower income families tend to live and work in the same geographical location. One of the reasons identified for their low incomes was the lack of access to employment opportunities outside their place of residence. The study said that while "it is frequently argued that commuting can overcome the access problem...the major mode of transportation is the automobile, and private ownership is a necessity that many simply cannot afford" (p. 8).

The natural reoccurrence of this problem clearly suggests that disadvantaged persons are constrained in their occupational opportunities by virtue of their residence patterns and that job training alone will not improve this condition.

those that require union-sanctioned apprenticeship (e.g., plumbing) have also been off-limits to participants.

Success in matching youths' interests to jobs has varied a great deal among programs. The Entitlement program required prime sponsors to provide "appropriate" and "constructive" jobs (Ball et al., 1979, p. 89), yet most job placements were in areas such as service, sales, clerical, and in "aide" positions. Because these experiences cover a narrow occupational range and are not different from those in previous manpower development programs, there is reason to believe that the occupational interests of many youths have not been satisfied.

Small programs, such as the CIP, or ones with extensive community participation, such as the YCS, have been able to provide more diversified opportunities. YCS has offered placements calling for a greater skill level, such as construction, home health care, "justice and legal rights," and "specialized transportation systems" (ACTION, 1979). A very positive feature of the work experience under YCS has been the intensive involvement of the youths in selecting their own experiences. Each enrollee enters into an agreement with the work sponsor specifying mutual responsibilities, project tasks, skills, and learning experiences. As noted below, YCS has reported some problems in matching youths' interests to jobs, but the care that has characterized the effort to do so is perhaps partly responsible for the program's very low dropout rate. Like YCS, the CIP has been able to provide a wide variety of experiences, ranging from professional to service occupations. Across its four sites, CIP offered Hands-On experiences in the following distribution: 41% professional, 28% service, 11% clerical, 7% craftsmen, 7% operators, 3% sales, and 2% managerial.

The ability of the CIP to provide a wide range of jobs, when compared to the limited choices available under Entitlement, reveals that there are significant advantages in job shadowing or observation as opposed to actual employment. Clearly, the occupations open to them are greater in number. Furthermore, professional jobs that would not be available to them otherwise, can be experienced. It seems that there may be more merit in having disadvantaged youths observe occupations of their choice than in having them perform menial tasks that are already familiar to them.

The experiences of both YCS and CIP showed that job matching is a complex activity. YCS personnel concluded that they needed three times as many available openings as program participants in order to produce carefully matched jobs. In the case of the CIP, matching has required a wide network of willing employers to provide matches for the first and second career choices of CIP enrollees. The success of the CIP in providing these experiences can be attributed to the program's affiliation with a well established CBO that lent it credibility with employers, and to the fact that only a handful of youths needed to be placed at any particular time.

Participation of private and public sectors. Private and public sectors offer systematically different work experiences. The range of occupational choices is greater within the private sector, particularly in profit-making organizations.

Data on work placements by sector indicate that programs run by prime sponsors and LEAs have placed enrollees mainly with public agencies, while those run by CBO's or with significant community participation have placed youths mostly in the private sector. After four months of operations, Entitlement reported that two-thirds of its enrollees had been placed in public agencies, one-fourth in non-profit agencies, and only 10% in private, profit-making firms (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1979, p. 10). One-third of the placements in public agencies were in public schools where youths performed menial groundskeeping, building maintenance, repairs, or clerical jobs (Ball et al., 1979, pp. 100-101). A later report on the Entitlement programs showed some variation in the work placements, but the bulk of the experiences continued to be in the public sector (56%), with fewer in private non-profit organizations (28%), and still fewer in private for-profit corporations (16%) (Diaz et al., 1980, p. 129).

In contrast, both YCS and the CIP have offered very diversified work experiences. In the CIP, 50% have been in the private for-profit sector, 29% in private non-profit, and 37% in public agencies.

The willingness of private for-profit organizations to provide work experiences is not primarily related to financial considerations. According to findings from the School-to-Work program, participation by private firms was affected mainly by: (a) employers' attitudes toward the problems of youth unemployment, (b) their willingness to arrange schedules to hire part-time employees, and (c) their prior involvement with CBOs (MDC, 1979). A study of private-sector performance in YEDPA programs (Levin, Baier, Ferman, Goldberg, & Levin, n.d.) also came to the conclusion that firms participate for reasons other than financial incentives. These authors based their inference on the study finding that several employers did not bill for the supervision they provided youths.

A survey of private-sector work sponsors involved in the Entitlement program found that 60% became sponsors because of the "cheap labor, no wage cost" incentive. Fifty-seven percent also reported that they participated because "it was a chance to do something for unemployed youth" (Diaz et al., 1980, p. 134). Findings from programs such as CIP, YCD, and Exemplary-in-School repeatedly noted employers' reluctance to participate because of having to deal with "dropouts" and "federal programs." It is also true, however, that conditions beyond the employers' control have critical consequences. Some firms are more able to set up part-time positions than others due to the nature of their businesses. These firms tend to be in retail, food service, and construction (MDC,

1979). Other companies are restricted by insurance contracts that limit coverage to regular employees. By giving young observers or job shadowers access to hazardous work areas, employers would risk expensive lawsuits.

Assessment of the Work Experience. Data from YEDPA programs indicates that the number of youth placements per work sponsor has ranged from 1 to 4, and averaged 2. The small number per site, largely attributable to the fact that most work sponsors have been small firms, presented logistical problems for program staff responsible for assessing the quality of the work experience. Even with only a handful of youths to monitor, program staff were often unable to visit all of the various work sites. There were inadequate funds (commuting costs had rarely been considered in program budgets), and inadequate staff time. Furthermore, employers found the presence of program staff members at the work site to be intrusive).

The implementation experience indicates that small programs such as the CIP, even though they had very small ratios of youths to career or job counselor (usually no more than 10 youths at a time), were unable to provide any closer or more frequent monitoring of the youths' work experience than large programs. In fact, it appears that work supervision--as well as job matching--is not affected by the size of the program. Because staff faced logistical problems in both small and large programs, these persons had to rely on the employers themselves for assessment of the work experience. Such information was usually gathered through telephone calls.

There are no systematic data on the kinds of supervision provided by employers. Information from the CIP experience, however, suggests that supervision varied tremendously and that it depended mainly on the seriousness with which the employer took the work experience request. Some employers took the youths under their tutelage and gave them thorough explanations about the selected occupations, others expected the youths to take the initiative in making sense of their work experience, and still others used youths mainly as sources of free labor.

There are also no systematic data on the youths' own assessment of their work experience; however, information obtained from CIP participants indicates that the majority felt their work exposure had been very beneficial. Data from the Exemplary-in-School program suggest that youth satisfaction increases with job matching (Rist et al., 1980).

In summary, the work experiences provided by YEDPA programs have been diverse. Program implementators generally succeeded in producing adequate numbers of placements to meet the needs of the enrolled youths. The qualitative aspects of the placements, such as their relevance to youths' preferences and the degree to which the forms and effects of the experiences have been assessed, were less satisfactory.

Coordination with Community Agencies and Firms

YEDPA programs have had to rely heavily on LEAs and community organizations for referrals of disadvantaged youths, and on agencies and firms in the local area for the provision of work experiences. The six programs examined herein differed greatly in the degree of community access they enjoyed. Factors that significantly affected the development of community contacts seemed to relate to the leadership of the program at the local level and to the involvement of community-based organizations (CBO's) in program administration.

Data from Entitlement indicates that programs run by prime sponsors (i.e., local government agencies) generally had somewhat limited contact with community firms. The prime sponsors had not developed extensive community contacts in the past, and short implementation schedules did not give them time to develop such relationships once the programs were underway (Ball et al., 1979). Further, many prime sponsors did not seek direct contact with potential employers but used intermediaries such as the Chamber of Commerce and the National Alliance of Businessmen.

In the case of YCS, which was run by a 21-community board with representation from organized labor, business, local and regional government, education, community-based organizations, and youth and neighborhood organizations, no significant problems were reported in obtaining youth referrals. The process of finding work sponsors was also relatively smooth. According to its own evaluation, "starting from scratch with a new non-profit corporation and entirely outside the CETA prime sponsor network, YCS developed nearly 1,400 service opportunities in 10 months" (ACTION, 1978, p. 16). It appears that the broad community participation of YCS, as well as the experience of the parent organization in dealing with community groups, played a helpful role in facilitating contact and coordination with the immediate community.

The experience of the CIP is noteworthy. Its performance shows that it attracted a very high proportion of out-of-school youths, obtained a number of supportive services for program participants, gained the approval and support of the LEAs in the communities where it operated, and provided program participants with work experiences not only related to their interest but also of a more professional and technical nature than was the case in other YEDPA programs.

The CIP performance can be attributed, at least partially, to its being run by a CBO. The program was administered by Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OIC/A), a primarily Black CBO with a nationwide reputation and well-established roots. A unique feature of OIC/A is that it possesses a strong and distinct philosophy of self-help. Because of this pervasive ethos, its programs are characterized by a feeling of "family" where both program personnel and participants show a mutual caring that goes beyond that seen in conventional educational and training programs.

Because of its affiliation with an organization possessing both stability and a proven record of performance, the CIP was able to deal successfully with the LEAs. In cases where the local school district proved reluctant to cooperate with the CIP, intervention by OIC/A was decisive in securing cooperation. This fact can be taken as an indication that the implementation of new and experimental programs is likely to be facilitated by having a well established organization sponsor it. In the case of the CIP, that was precisely the role played by OIC/A.

The previous experience of OIC/A in operating skill training programs had produced an informal network of potential employers in the community. By using this network and by referring to the record of OIC/A in training and placement of its enrollees, members of the CIP staff were able to win the cooperation of significant number of diverse employers.

The Comparative Advantage of CBOs. The know-how of CBO's in reaching the needier youths in local communities has also been apparent in other YEDPA programs. It was noted earlier that the Entitlement program appealed to few dropouts (8% of its enrollees). However, data showed that the sites with the highest out-of-school enrollment (up to 13%) were those in which CBOs participated in recruitment activities (Ball et al., 1979, p. 63). According to this information, Entitlement programs run by a government agency, an independent contractor, or an LEA alone were less successful in recruiting out-of-school youths than those administered by a combination of agencies that included a CBO.

Data from the School-to-Work programs also support the positive role played by CBOs. One of the program implementors, the Urban League, was reported to have performed well in gaining access to private employers because of "its history of close ties with the private sector." Data from School-to-Work also suggest that the particular philosophy adopted by most CBOs helps them in gaining support from school authorities. It has been reported that some LEA administrators consider a major attribute of CBOs their "ability to provide positive role models and to boost the self-confidence of minority youths" (MDC, 1980).

The different levels of success achieved by YEDPA programs in establishing community contacts indicate that such contacts are hard to develop in a short time. Since the implementation schedules of all YEDPA programs allowed little time for developing resources, sites with an already established network did better than those without one.

The Presence of Suitable Staff

From the administrative viewpoint, no action is more critical to program implementation than the selection and training of the

personnel who are to operate the program. Crucial as these activities were to the YEDPA programs, their expectation was characterized by a series of shortcomings, some due to lack of time, some to insufficient funding, and others to lack of adequate planning.

Selection. Because of pressures to get programs operating as soon as possible, very little time was available for the task of staff recruitment. Though programs such as Entitlement, School-to-Work, Exemplary, and CIP negotiated the major conditions for program implementation with DOL for several months, much time and effort was expended in identifying suitable communities for the program, establishing contact with LEAs and various community organizations and firms, and obtaining official support from them. By the time the actual grants were given to the various sites, program implementors had between two and three weeks to advertise for, interview, hire, and train their staffs.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that substantial numbers of those who were hired proved to be poorly suited for their jobs. The CIP, notwithstanding its detailed specification list of staff qualifications, made many unfortunate choices. As events would show, leadership was essential to good program functioning. Sites with poor leaders encountered considerable difficulties in implementing the program and eventually three of the four original directors had to be replaced.

Several of the Entitlement sites run by prime sponsors made the mistake of not hiring additional staff. Thus, laborious recruitment, verification of eligibility, payroll monitoring, and work site supervision tasks had to be carried out by staff members who had little time for these matters (Ball et al., 1979).

Training. The training received by the staff of YEDPA programs was generally very limited. It ranged from one to four days of preservice training, and from none to once-a-month inservice training. Programs such as YCS and CIP that had clear models offered intensive training, but various other programs did not. The evidence indicates that the staff of some programs had to perform a variety of tasks immediately after being hired. The intensity of these activities allowed almost no time for training. Staff members who did well did so because of their personal abilities, initiative, and common sense. For this reason staff selection was even more critical than is usually the case.

It appears that individuals who are particulaly well suited for these programs are "street-smart" persons who have the ability to relate to participating youths because of their similar background and experience. Having all the proper credentials does not necessarily qualify a person for the job, as the CIP experience revealed. One of the CIP sites made a serious attempt to upgrade the academic qualifications of its staff, only to realize the program had lost much of its appeal among youth. The staff upgrading was followed by

a marked increase in absenteeism. As a long-time CIP staff member put it:

> The staff may be better qualified now from an academic point of view, but they just don't care about the interns. It's just a job for most of them. You need people in the program that are dedicated, that really care.... It's good to improve the quality of the staff but you need both if it's going to work.

Retention. A characteristic common to all YEDPA programs has been their limited ability to retain staff members. It appears that the salaries and vacation plans offered by the various YEDPA programs have not been sufficiently competitive to attract or retain the most qualified people. The CIP, run by a CBO, pegged its salary scale to those of the parent organization. Program staff members, on the other hand, compared themselves to their counterparts in the regular public school (teachers and counselors) and found their earnings and vacations substantially less attractive. The CIP experienced a high and constant staff turnover. After 33 months of operation, the CIP had an average turnover rate of 120%. Significantly, the majority of the terminations were voluntary and many of them were for reasons of career advancement.

Another factor abetting staff turnover derives from the inherent instability of employment in YEDPA programs. Some staff members accepted positions in YEDPA programs while waiting for better jobs to materialize. Young staff members often took YEDPA employment to gain the experience they needed to become more competitive in the job market.

There is also evidence that programs catering mostly to potential and actual dropouts develop environments that are stressful to the staff. Data from a study of New York public schools showed that programs for dropouts produced a high rate of staff turnover, as personnel left after one or two years.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined five administration-related implementation activities. Although these activities were initiated and conducted by program staff, they were not self-contained. Rather, they were extremely dependent on local contexts, as persons and organizations in the communities where the YEDPA programs operated shaped a great deal of the outcomes in these activities.

Recruitment turned out to be a more dificult and time-consuming task than anyone had anticipated. Most program implementors were not adequately prepared to recruit out-of-school youths, and many solved this problem by shifting attention to in-school youths. Programs that succeeded in recruiting dropouts were those

with diffuse and informal networks in the community. Word-of-mouth communications succeeded in reaching such youths whereas media messages failed.

Collaboration on the part of the LEA was critical both in recruiting in-school youths and in finding meaningful work experiences. Such collaboration was eventually obtained by all programs, but the process was characterized by protracted negotiations among the concerned parties and the outcome by limited flexibility on the part of the LEA. The quality of relationships with the LEA was very context-dependent. Except in a few isolated instances, LEA behavior reflected the traditional attitudes and practices of school districts when faced with nonacademic instruction or rival educational agencies.

Perhaps the most contextually-dependent activity was the provision of work experiences. To carry out this activity, program administrators had to rely on the willingness of community employers. Since economic incentives for the employers' participation were weak, the main resource open to YEDPA administrators was to appeal to the employers' sense of civic duty. Not surprisingly, programs that succeeded in obtaining the commitment of diverse employers in the community were programs run by groups which themselves were known for their commitment to help disadvantaged and oppressed groups.

Given the programs' dependency on community resources for the performance of administration-related activities, it is not surprising that those directly involved with CBOs or community representatives encountered less difficulty. It would appear that, since YEDPA programs require so much voluntary support from community organizations, CBOs should have a definite role in their implementation.

Successful program implementation was also shown to depend heavily on time, timing, and proper staff selection. From the identification of youths to the finding of work experiences for them, program administrators must count on the receptivity of community agencies, business firms, and LEAs. This characteristic of work-oriented programs requires that program administrators be able to communicate program objectives and features clearly and effectively--so that community members will understand and accept the program.

These findings have policy implications for the implementation of future programs. They suggest that, prior to program operations, careful attention must be given to start-up activities. These must have more time allotted to them, both for the proper selection of program staff and for the development of community resources needed for program implementation.

FACTORS CONDITIONING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The various findings examined above indicate that the implementation processes of the various DOL-sponsored programs have met with different degrees of success, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Efforts to install new programs are never devoid of problems, whether anticipated or unexpected. In the case of the programs examined here, these implementation problems can be traced to the following four main sets of factors: time constraints, inadequate program definition, the complexity of joint action, and incompatibilities between service and research demands. Each of these sets of factors is analyzed below.

Time Constraints

Following the signing of the YEDPA legislation in August 1977, DOL sought to have work-oriented programs in place and operating by the following spring. Although, in principle, this afforded a six-month preparation time, in fact it did not, since the interval was shared by organizations operating at three different levels.

Since DOL could not implement the YEDPA programs directly, the first step of the implementation process was to select program administrators at the national level. These, in turn, selected program administrators at the local level. The local administrators then either ran the programs directly or selected subcontractors. Table 2 lists the various agencies involved in the implementation of the selected YEDPA programs.

Implementors at each level had very little time to design and coordinate the tasks for which they were responsible. DOL had from September to November to appoint program administrators at the national level. These administrators had between one and two months to select demonstration sites and to hire and/or train the staff at these sites. Local site administrators had between one and three months to put the necessary human and physical resources in place before beginning to provide services to the target youth. The consequence of these time constraints was a lack of adequate planning. The not-unexpected result was that important start-up activities were either incompletely on inadequately carried out.

The limited time available placed heavy demands on the managerial abilities of program administrators. Some administrators, as in the case of YCS, responded to the challenge in a very effective way. Others, most frequently prime sponsors under Entitlement, became overwhelmed by program demands and were not able to correct many of the problems that emerged during initial program implementation.

Table 2

Implementors of YEDPA Programs at the National and Local Levels

Program	National Implementor	Local Implementor
Entitlement	Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation	Various: prime sponsors, CBOs, LEAs, independent contractors.
YCS	ACTION	Local branch.
CIP	OIC/A	Local branches.
School-to-Work	Urban League, U.S. Employment Service, SER, National Council of Negro Women, RTP, DOL's Women Bureau.	Local branches.
Exemplary	Youthwork	LEAs, independent contractors, alternative schools.
Job Corps	Job Corps	Independent contractors, regional offices of various U.S. agencies and departments.

Sites that wanted to have the Entitlement program in their community developed their own proposals describing the number of youths they would serve, the types of jobs that would be available, and the community agencies and firms that would participate in it. They presented a preliminary proposal in September and a final one in December. From their perspective, they had three months to estimate the pool of potential youths in the community, identify the gamut of work sites in the community, obtain the commitment of agencies and businesses to become work sites, arrange with the LEA for admission of out-of-school youths, and coordinate schedules that would allow program enrollees to combine classes and work experience.

It is now evident that the planning of several Entitlement prime sponsors was both hasty and incomplete. First, some of them failed to expand their staffs, even though it should have been clear that the Entitlement tasks of recruitment, enrollment, identification of job slots, payroll monitoring, and work site management

could not be accomplished in the "spare time" of existing staff members. Second, since prime sponsors had to give evidence of commitment from the work sites in order to complete their final application during November, they had no recourse but to use their established networks of public and nonprofit youth sponsors (Ball et al., 1979). This limited the selection of work experiences to those that had been available before Entitlement. The new agencies that did agree to cooperate with Entitlement often failed to live up to their promises. The fact that Entitlement grants were awarded competitively also had a negative impact since this competition was found to "create powerful incentives for agencies to oversell their abilities to carry out a program" (Ball et al., 1979, p. 27).

The fact that the incompatibilities between program, DOL, and LEA calendars were not adequately considered represents a third planning deficiency. DOL-sponsored programs operated under a fiscal year that began on October 1, whereas the LEA fiscal year started on either July 1 or January 1, and its academic year in September. This had serious implications for recruitment, enrollment, arrangement of work experiences, and even program staffing.

The case of the CIP is of significance because this program had been field tested before, and the implementation process called for its replication rather than for "beginning from scratch." The CIP disseminators had been actively involved with the development of the original CIP, but they were also substantially affected by the lack of planning time for implementation in an additional four sites. According to a CIP disseminator, the compressed dissemination schedule represented "an impossible task but we had no other choice. We had to follow the time frame given to us or wait forever. We had to give it a shot."

The CBO running the CIP at the national level obtained the implementation grant in November though it had been doing some tentative planning as early as September. Officially, the local CBO affiliates (the equivalent of the prime sponsors) had scarcely two weeks to develop their proposals (although some of them had also undertaken exploratory planning). As in the case of Entitlement, the competition for CIP funds also led the CBO affiliates to oversell themselves and to minimize any potential problems in their proposals.

The four winning sites, which received their contracts in December, 1977, had to hire their staffs immediately so that they could be trained in time to start operations in January, 1978. The process of getting the staff and physical resources in place at maximum speed led to problems of incomplete or inadequate staff, inadequate development of recruitment strategies, unresolved agreements with the LEAs, and limited knowledge about the program by the community. Several of these problems, particularly recruitment and staffing, were critical and noticeably affected the implementation process. As noted earlier (Recruitment Strategies), the task of

meeting enrollment quotas was so difficult that instruction and counseling during recruitment periods was drastically reduced.

In contrast to Entitlement and, to a lesser extent, the CIP, the YCS implementation appears to have been characterized by both careful planning and flexibility. Though the program was developed from scratch, YCS administrators conducted a small pilot project before starting full-scale operations. They produced a plan with clear objectives and performance standards, and made provisions for adequate time and personnel to accomplish the anticipated tasks. The YCS success gave strong evidence of the importance of certain key planning activities. YCS developers engaged in careful personnel selection and training. They did not initiate any recruitment activities until they were "satisfied with the staff capabilities to operate the program" (ACTION, 1978, p. 16). They set up an effective governing board with broad community participation and held numerous conferences and meetings with community organizations for the purpose of developing work projects for program enrollees. They planned a staggered recruitment/enrollment strategy and a gradual increase in the number of admissions. They allowed themselves four months between receiving the award and beginning to serve youths and, when they realized the program was "not yet operational," they took two additional months to prepare.

The experiences of these programs shows that those who attempted to meet the time constraints imposed by DOL subsequently faced significant problems. Those who took more time to prepare were able to attain their implementation objectives more smoothly. These findings do not suggest that more time alone would have solved all the implementation problems, however. The administrators who demanded more time were those with more extensive planning experience. They had a clear idea of where and why it was needed.

Most planning efforts, particularly those that seek to implement ~~federal~~ legislation, are characterized by a sense of urgency which usually leads to the "immediate" activation of the new program or innovation. The time constraints faced by YEDPA implementors were no different from those experienced by CETA administrators a few years earlier. Immediately after the CETA legislation was signed in December 1973, DOL set in motion a series of activities to put the program in operation by the beginning of fiscal year 1975. In the interim period (approximately 14 months), numerous tasks had to be performed: drafting of regulations, development of allocation systems, identification of prime sponsors, preparation of technical assistance guides, and so on. Given the time allotted and the nature of the task, CETA programs were also forced to start prematurely (Snedeker & Snedeker, 1978). This pattern of imposing severe time limits needs to be seriously examined by program administrators at the federal level. Without adequate time for planning and preparation, serious problems seem almost certain to arise. Excessive eagerness to demonstrate that some program works, has a high probability of leading to the opposite outcome.

Inadequate Program Definition

A close examination of the various DOL-sponsored "programs" reveals that not all of these were fully developed conceptually by the time they began to operate.

Of the six programs examined in this report, only two were clearly and completely described. The CIP was unique in having detailed specifications regarding the number, qualifications, and roles of staff; the characteristics of its career-exploration experience, its instructional methodology; and its desired program climate. These program descriptions were very helpful in facilitating action by the implementors at the local level. Likewise, the YCS had detailed personnel qualifications and roles, clear a priori definitions of what the job experience should do for each youth and sponsor, and a description of performance standards associated with various objectives. Both programs reported relatively smooth implementation experiences.

Other YEDPA programs, such as Entitlement, Exemplary, and School-to-Work, were originally little more than statements of "policy." Entitlement, in particular, consisted mainly of various social/educational goals and very general descriptions of the means by which they were to be attained. Since each prime sponsor developed its own proposal, there were as many Entitlement "programs" as sites. Given the broad features of the program expressed in the legislation and the tentative nature of the program at the local level, prime sponsors could give only vague (and sometimes incorrect) explanations of what the Entitlement program was. Some local administrators were heard to describe the program to potential work sponsors as "a year-round SPEDY [Summer Program for Economically Disadvantaged Youth] where the activities are almost wholly work-oriented" (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1979, p. 38). Preliminary data from Entitlement indicate that the lack of definition of program features affected recruitment, procurement of appropriate work sites, and coordination with the LEA.

The vagueness with which School-to-Work programs were defined was considered by program evaluators a major obstacle to implementation. They concluded:

> It strikes us that the School-to-Work concept embodies rather complex design and operational features wrapped up on deceptively neat and simple-looking packages--at least insofar as they're described in original proposals from sponsoring agencies. Implementing the YCD concept has not been an easy task for some operators and most have found unanticipated delays or unforeseen circumstances have occurred along the way. (MDC, 1979)

In observing that programs with well-defined features were easier to implement than those with ambiguous characteristics, it must be emphasized that smooth implementation was only partly a function of program definition. The presence of staff with administrative and leadership abilities was crucial in all programs. There is evidence, however, that their task was greatly facilitated when there were clear descriptions of the activities they were to perform.

The Complexity of Joint Action

A recurrent theme in the implementation of the DOL-sponsored programs has been the unanticipated complexity associated with such apparently simple tasks as recruitment, work placement, and coordination with the LEA. These tasks became complex because they involved several community agencies and businesses and were highly dependent on contextual factors.

Recruitment activities became difficult because obtaining referrals of disadvantaged youths required the cooperation of numerous individuals in many agencies. Like recruitment, work-placement activities were also difficult. They needed an active network of community agencies and businesses, capable of offering different work experiences. In addition, this network had to be composed of firms and agencies willing to provide the work experience to the target youths and to offer some form of monitoring. Since the organizations in this network operated mainly on a voluntary basis, program administrators could not enforce compliance. Their only means to obtain work sites was through persuasion, and this demanded time.

Evidence that the complexities of recruitment and the provision of work experiences were underestimated comes from the initial paucity of recruitment strategies in the case of Entitlement and the CIP, and from the limited personnel assigned to identify work sites in the case of Entitlement. As noted above, the administrators of the YCS were more aware that the tasks would be difficult and time consuming and planned accordingly.

An assumption was made that coordination with the LEA would be assured by the simple signing of a letter of agreement. That such an agreement would not suffice in the absence of further detailed arrangements and understandings was evidenced in the Entitlement experience where "nearly all prime sponsors passed their deadline for negotiating LEA agreement" (Wurzberg, 1978, p. 48) and the CIP experience where coordination problems arose, frequently long after an agreement had been signed.

Both entitlement and the CIP depended on LEA collaboration for both the referral of in-school youth and program operations. Unfortunately, the administrators of these programs lacked adequate experience in dealing with LEAs. In the case of Entitlement,

administrators at the national level made unrealistic demands of the LEA, asking it to provide attendance and performance monitoring reports on participating youths each month. The schools regarded these demands as excessive--particularly since no incentives were offered--but it is clear that the Entitlement administrators did not share this viewpoint. Indicative of this perception is Entitlement's assertion that:

> The degree of cooperation required of the schools was, in most cases, minimal: They were required to report the attendance and academic performance of Entitlement youths, and report poor performance even though it should result in the prime sponsor terminating the youth's job. Schools were requested, in some cases, to accommodate class hours for youths who would otherwise not be able to schedule ten hours work per week (Ball et al., 1979, p. 178) [emphasis added].

For the CIP, the task of coordination with the LEA became complex primarily because, in two of the four sites, the CIP administrators did not fully understand the needs and priorities of the LEA while the LEA administrators lacked a similar understanding of the CIP. The contexts of the four replication sites differed so much from that of the prototype site that what was learned there was of little use. It was difficult to reach agreement on issues such as credit award, referrals of students, and recording of grades at two sites, in part because the leadership was inadequate but in part, too, because the staff was unsure as to how they should proceed.

Compounding the problem was the fact that the LEA was unfamiliar with alternative programs and, consequently, required considerable time to decide how the work experiences would be credited, what criteria would be used for identifying students, and what arrangements would have to be made so that CIP students could receive high school diplomas while the LEA continued to receive state funds based on their attendance. Dealing with the LEA was facilitated in cases where the LEA had had prior experience with alternative programs, where the CIP leadership was resourceful, and where conditions such as over-crowded schools made it desirable for the LEA to cooperate with the CIP.

In general, agreements that require participation of several agencies are complex and often of limited success. Experience from earlier federal programs that called for joint action provides ample support for this position. Collaborative agreements mandated in major programs such as the Model School Project and the Teacher Corps have generally been ritualistic rather than functional. A Teacher Corps administrator describes collaborative agreements thus:

> Collaborative planning is a requirement of many proposals for federal funding. The Teacher Corps, for example, expects institutions of higher learning (typically the institutions responsible for soliciting funds) to draw into the planning process teachers, school administrators, and members of the community in which the target school is located. While in theory involving these people seems a desirable, democratic thing to do, realistically it often is impossible. Innovators sometimes resort to creating an impression that decision making has been collaborative while failing in actuality to make certain that the people who will be affected by the innovation approve of it. Little time is spent anticipating potentially negative by-products of change or building strong personal allegiances to the project.
>
> A third factor that can contribute to planning problems is the tendency of those seeking to make an impact to overcommit themselves. In the spirit of political campaign promises, proposal authors produce long lists of objectives in order to increase the probability of gaining the funding agency's support (Duke, 1977, p. 4).

This description matches, in several respects, what occurred under the YEDPA implementation.

Incompatibilities between Service and Research Demands

The YEDPA legislation sought to fulfill two, at least partially incompatible purposes, namely (a) to provide a solution (work-oriented programs) to a major social problem (youth unemployment) and (b) to test whether the solution was effective. The Act identified as the purpose of the new programs "to employ and increase the future employability of young persons...and to test different approaches in solving the employment problems of youths" (Youth Programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, 1977 p. 46728).

It was the need to provide a service that prodded DOL into requesting that program administrators at the local level start serving youths immediately, despite the fact that several sites were ill prepared to undertake this task. It was also largely because of the service need that DOL was firm in requesting that sites honor "contractual obligations" by enrolling as many students as stated in the enrollment projections.

The pressure to meet enrollment quotas seriously affected the operation of some programs, and had repercussions for both service and research functions. One of the reasons Entitlement did not enroll many out-of-school youths was that the severe time pressures encouraged prime sponsors to concentrate on in-school youths since they were easier to approach. The failure of the CIP to meet the enrollment targets led to threats of program termination by DOL, which seriously affected staff morale and program operations. The establishment of fixed quotas with deadlines not only resulted in temporary paralysis of the program but also forced staff members to recruit and enroll what they termed "a disproportionate number [of youths] who are probably not suited for the program."

In the case of Entitlement, it was soon discovered that the demand for "generation and collection of standardized, disciplined data from the sites...challenged [the prime sponsors'] management and affected implementation" (Ball et al., 1979, pp. 7-8). Many of these data-gathering efforts related to the process of "reverification," which forced program administrators to engage in a laborious process of checking whether enrollees continued to be eligible for the program. Evaluation pressures also affected implementation of the CIP. Initial evaluation procedures called for group testing and discrete student intakes (i.e., cohorts to begin at specific times) as opposed to open entry or staggered intakes into the program. Delays between recruitment and testing and between testing and intake had the effect of reducing the number of enrollees. To be sure, evaluation procedures were not the sole factors responsible for attrition, but they played a salient role.

Data from the CIP in particular provide evidence of the difficulty of "evaluating" a program before it is allowed to establish itself as a "service" for the community. DOL wanted to determine whether the CIP could show positive outcomes within a two-year demonstration period. On the other hand, the very fact that the program operated as a demonstration created a climate of instability for both by program staff and the communities in which the CIPs operated. As the demonstration approached the middle of its second year, program staff started worrying about whether the program and, consequently, their employment would be continued or not. The prolonged wait for the news of program continuation was reported by CIP administrators to have affected: (a) the size and nature of the recruitment pool--as program staff did not know how many youths it could serve, (b) the retention and morale of staff--as several instructors and counselors sought more permanent jobs or became frustrated working in an uncertain environment, and (c) the relationship with the LEA--as the latter feared the CIP might not be able to accept students who had already been subjected to a long waiting period.

Experience with these work-oriented programs indicates that it is difficult to implement programs that seek both to offer a service and operate as experiments. These two objectives tend to make

incompatible demands on program implementors, and to compound whatever other difficulties may arise. It is not the case that concurrent service delivery and research programs are inherently impossible to establish; nevertheless, the task should be recognized as a difficult one that requires careful planning, close cooperation, and open communications.

An interesting characteristic of the four sets of factors examined in this chapter is that they are primarily "structural problems," which Duke (1977) defines as those that are built into the process by which innovations are funded and that implementors are rarely free to alter. The restrictive timelines, the need for collaborative agreements, the vague program definition, and the conflicting service and research needs of the programs were major problems for program implementors at the local level.

These four sets of factors operated as inflexible program features that implementors were obligated to accept. Structural problems have been observed in previous studies of implementation and their impacts tend to be serious (see, for instance, Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). This finding suggests that a great deal of care must precede the dissemination of a new program and that program implementors must be given adequate time for important start-up activities.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The findings presented in this report make it possible to draw a number of conclusions and, in some cases, highly plausible inferences with respect to three implementation concerns stated in the 1977 DOL Knowledge Development Plan.

The Appeal of Current Delivery Programs to the Target Group

Several factors, other than the features of the programs themselves influence youths' decision to enroll in work-oriented programs. It is not possible, at this time, to measure the relative impact of such factors as sociocultural conditions, local labor market influences, and youths' perceptions of the programs, but it is obvious that they are responsible for much of the large disparity between the pool of potential program participants and those who ultimately enroll.

Actual enrollment in YEDPA programs was some 20% below expectations. In addition, these programs were characterized by high rates of absenteeism and attrition. It has been seen that various components common to work-oriented programs were implemented only with great difficulty and, thus, the services provided to program participants suffered. In part at least, the absenteeism and attrition can thus be attributed to incomplete program implementation.

On the other hand, there are no solid criteria for establishing an acceptable level of program attractiveness, or drawing power. What does seem clear, however, is that standards one might apply relative to in-school youths would be inappropriate for out-of-school youths. It also seems that one should not expect that any given program will provide solutions to problems that are embedded in a strong societal and/or political context. Perhaps the most that can be expected of these programs is that they succeed in liberating a few youths from the social forces that tend to imprison them in a life of unemployment and poverty.

The lessons learned from the implementations of YEDPA programs do reveal some useful facts about program appeal. Out-of-school youths are not attracted by programs that require their return to the traditional high school. Their experience with the public schools has been negative and they are more interested in alternative educational settings, particularly those that offer individualized attention. On the other hand, out-of-school youths are interested in joining programs that allow them to engage in concrete, individually tailored work experiences.

Among youths currently attending school there is a willingness to remain in school when offered a stipend, but for some of them,

attending an alternative school setting, even if not remunerated, is much more attractive.

Because of the apparent hierarchy in preferences, it seems that programs that (a) offer either a good match of jobs to interests or an alternative academic environment, (b) provide a host of auxiliary services, and (c) offer a financial incentive have more appeal than programs that do not incorporate these features.

The Provision of "Meaningful" Work Experiences

The various YEDPA programs have implemented the "work experience" concept in different ways with respect to job selection, duration, and assessment.

Matching jobs to youth interests appears to be one way to make work experiences meaningful and to increase the drawing and holding power of programs.

In general, programs seeking to serve large numbers of youths have been less successful in providing work experiences carefully matched to youths' preferences. On the other hand, large programs that include broad community participation do seem capable of providing youths with more satisfactory and satisfying work experiences. Many of the more successful work experiences, however, were preceded by training in work attitudes and basic skills.

Assessing the quality or meaningfulness of work experiences is difficult even in the case of small programs. The fact that they may involve only one youth per job site poses logistical problems for program job developers that are not likely to be resolved without major increases in personnel and funds.

The provision of work experience for disadvantaged youths has faced one problem also encountered by disadvantagd adults: their dependence on public transportation limits accessibility to preferred work-experience locations.

The participation of private, and particularly profit-making firms, in the provision of work experiences remains an elusive objective. Despite the wage subsidies present in some programs, relatively few private businesses have made job opportunities available. On the other hand, programs run either by CBOs or by groups with broad community representation seem capable of securing the support of private-sector employers.

The Feasibility of New Institutional Arrangements for the Provision of Work Experiences

The YEDPA programs included in this study represented three different institutional arrangements: (a) an alternative educational agency in the case of the CIP, (b) an approach based on

broad community participation in the case of YCS, and (c) the use of the regular public school in conjunction with existing manpower agencies and other government units in the case of Entitlement, Exemplary, and School-to-Work.

Findings reveal that, while all three institutional arrangements are possible, some appear to have significant advantages over others. Programs with well-developed community networks, i. e., those affiliated with CBOs, tended to perform better in gaining access to disadvantaged youths (particularly those who were out of school) and in securing the cooperation of business firms in the community.

The cooperation of the LEA in the identification of potential enrollees, awarding academic credit, and even granting high school diplomas is possible, though obtaining this cooperation is likely to be a time-consuming and laborious process in most communities. On the other hand, it is clear that LEAs face a number of philosophical, practical, and political disincentives for collaborating with DOL-sponsored programs. The fact that they have collaborated is a testament to the powerful incentive afforded by external funding. It appears unlikely that LEAs will adopt these programs once federal support is cut off.

The problems that emerge in dealing with LEAs could be avoided if work-oriented programs could be given legal status as educational agencies. Such a move would be questioned by teachers' associations and would become a controversial political issue. On the other hand, to expect a smooth and continuous LEA collaboration with YEDPA programs is naive and short-sighted.

The performance of prime sponsors in gaining access to the neediest youths and in providing "meaningful" work experiences has been rather poor. However, no conclusive statements can be made about their capabilities, as these agencies were subject to severe time constraints during the implementation process. Also, they were assigned tasks relatively unfamiliar to them--the establishment of relations with LEAs and with numerous businesses and agencies in the community. It remains to be tested whether the knowledge gained from the current experience has rendered prime sponsors more proficient.

On the other hand, the YEDPA experience has shown that the indirect networks through which some CBOs operate permit them to identify employers in the community and to convince them of the need to help youths. In the implementation of YEDPA programs--which were characterized by a short duration and funding stability--the issue of credibility was critical because there is no time to develop it. CBOs, having their credibility already established, were able to outperform most prime sponsors.

Other Implementation Issues

In addition to the conclusions presented above, the experience of implementing work-oriented programs has provided a number of lessons that should increase our understanding about specific implementation activities. These lessons can be summarized as follows:

- Recruitment of disadvantaged youths requires differential approaches with out-of- and in-school youths; in particular, recruitment of out-of-school youths is labor intensive and demands personal contact with these youths. Gaining access to them is facilitated when recruiter and recruit come from the same socioeconomic background and community. This finding suggests that CBOs have some potential advantages over other agencies.

- The commitment of the target youths to the presence of YEDPA programs is usually fragile. Eligibility requirements and entrance tests--although intended to assure that the youths served are indeed members of the target population--have the negative effect of deterring a substantial number of youths from participation.

- Targeting programs on poor, low-achieving students has the unanticipated effect of giving the program a social stigma that dissuades other needy youths from participating. To avoid the stigma currently associated with these programs, policy makers should open participation to a wider range of students, including youths that are gifted, talented, and with incomes above the poverty level. At present, most YEDPA programs are instances of socioeconomic and racial segregation.

- Adequate incentives remain to be developed to secure the participation of private, for-profit firms in providing work experiences; wage subsidies are not sufficient to obtain the collaboration of many commercial and industrial firms.

- Well established CBOs appear to have significant advantages in the areas of recruitment and provision of work experiences over most prime sponsors. The performance of CBOs is by no means uniform, but organizations that have been in existence for several years and which have established affiliates in many parts of the country have an expertise and sense of commitment that must be acknowledged.

Between 1964 and 1975 over 30 federal education and training programs for youths were established. With the YEDPA legislation, four major new programs were implemented. Despite these efforts, the technology for helping youths with multiple "disadvantages," remains uncertain. Years of trying, unfortunately, has also produced little knowledge about how best to help them.

In the process, research has shown that program developers and operators have usually underestimated the complexity of the tasks involved and the time required for adequate completion. All too frequently, implementation issues have not been properly considered. In consequence, implementation activities have rarely been preceded by proper planning, training of program implementors, and study of contextual influences.

As acute observers of the implementation process have remarked, individuals fail to "appreciate how difficult it is to make the ordinary happen" (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973, p. xii). It is the hope of this report to have underscored the various complexities associated with apparently ordinary actions.

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